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Classical Writing

Aesop



By
Tracy Davis Gustilo
and
Lene Mahler Jaqua

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Lene Mahler Jaqua



Lyceum Academy Press

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Dedication

To all the inspiring ladies on Trivium-at-Home,
whose collective wisdom ever spurs us on.

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Foreword

Long, long ago, in the days of ancient Greece, lived a strong man named Milo of Croton. Now Milo was a wrestler; in fact, he was the greatest wrestler of the Greek world, winning six Olympic championships. But he didn't come by his strength and skill without sweat and sore muscles. Milo set himself a goal, the goal of being able to hoist a full-grown bull upon his shoulders. He knew that to accomplish that goal, he couldn't just mosey on down to the local farmer's field and pick up a heifer; he would have to start small. So, he hit on a plan: he would begin with a tiny calf. Each day he lifted the calf and paraded it around the field. And day by day as the calf grew heavier and heavier, Milo also grew stronger and stronger. You probably can guess the rest of the story. In time, he was hoisting a bull.

Just so, the ancients reasoned, one could increase one's skill in the art of writing. Beginning with the smallest elements of composition and steadily working through a carefully constructed and sequential series of writing exercises, a student's ability to compose could be strengthened incrementally: day by day, precept upon precept, line upon line. A repertoire of patterns was taught and imitated and practiced and a stock of skills developed for future use. Throughout the ages this simultaneous instruction in language and composition and the endeavor to "make haste slowly" characterized rhetorical education.

Throughout *Classical Writing*, step by tiny step, Lene and Tracy have beautifully captured the essence of the very foundations of rhetoric. True to the classical tradition, they have avoided laying out a scripted text with slick formula to be slavishly followed and, instead, opted to provide you with the resources to be your child's mentor. Rather than teaching *for* you, they teach you *how to teach*, meticulously walking you through the process of introducing precepts, imitating models, and practicing principles. But *Classical Writing* is more than merely a sequence of exercises in composition; it is an introduction to a way of seeing the world. Tracy and Lene have returned to a tradition in which words represent real concepts, ideas are important, virtue is essential, and truth matters. For restoring to us a proven pedagogy and setting it in the context of truth, beauty, and goodness sought for His sake and in His service, we owe them a debt of gratitude.

Tina MacLennan
August 2002

Preface

Truth is a precious commodity. Christ said that we should know the Truth and the Truth would set us free. Communicating Truth in love is our Christian calling. It is of great consequence that Truth is judged and expressed correctly. To that end, we offer this new writing curriculum as a small beginning to get our students thinking about Truth, living Truth for themselves, and learning to communicate that Truth to others.

Lene Jaqua and Tracy Gustilo
August 2002

Acknowledgements

With loving acknowledgement to Mike, my husband of 17 years, for his creative suggestions to improve this manuscript, and for his patient endurance of my obsessive work habits. Hugs to my four "guinea pigs" without whom I would have no homeschool to write about. Truly, the most frustrating, aggravating, hilarious, interesting and jubilant moments in homeschooling have occurred as we have thought, written, edited and rewritten narrative upon narrative together. May we have many years of knee-slapping, floor rolling, tear filled bursts of laughter together yet, as we continue to learn to laugh at our writing and at ourselves. -lmj

With profound thanks to all my family, living near and far, for their encouragement and patient listening to all my "ideas". To my husband Nick, especially, I owe more gratitude than I can say, for his unstinting love, his time, his opinions, however much I may sometimes chafe at them, and for his uncomplaining help with the children while I work. To my munchkins, now growing so big, I express my wonder at their "turning out all right" despite all I've done to mess 'em up over the years! I love you all dearly. May God continue to watch over you. May He help us to keep struggling and learning together and to seek Him first. Oh, and may He please help dear Eli with his handwriting! -tdg

Finally, we owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to two of our favorite veteran homeschool mothers, Tina MacLennan and LaJuana Decker.

- ❖ To Tina, first of all for being a sounding board for all our crazy ideas and secondly for plowing through the manuscript identifying errors ranging from punctuation to philosophy. Tina, your zeal for logic and rhetoric, your love for words and language has inspired us from the moment we first met you, both in cyber space and in person. You are a trailblazer not only in homeschooling but also in recovering the "lost tools" for classical education in general.
- ❖ To LaJuana, for your passion for excellence in writing. Your patient detailed editing of this manuscript simply blew us away. This work is notably better because of your amazing ability to re-word awkward sentences. We admire your love and concern for new homeschool moms and are **VERY** <wink> appreciative of your efforts to help us make this manuscript friendlier to the beginning teacher. Blessings to you this year as you send your first scholar off to college.

Chapter One

Introduction

"The ideal orator is a good man, skilled in speaking."

Quintilian

Before we can begin to lay out the details of a classical program in writing, we must recommend the ideal of Quintilian. This first century Roman teacher demanded that an orator must be, before all else, a good man. Virtue must come first, before any and all teaching of rhetorical skill. In his introduction to the *Institutio Oratoria* Quintilian says:

"My aim, then, is the education of the perfect orator. The first essential for such an one is that he should be a good man, and consequently we demand of him not merely the possession of exceptional gifts of speech, but of all the excellences of character as well." (I.preface.9)

In *Classical Writing*, we similarly demand virtue of our students, and warn them that all the rhetorical skill in the world will mean nothing if they fail to attain virtue. Toward the conclusion of his work Quintilian, reflecting on all that he has taught, remarks,

"I myself, who have laboured to the best of my ability to contribute something of value to oratory, shall have rendered the worst of services to mankind, if I forge these weapons not for a soldier, but for a robber." (VII.i.1)

Training in speech and writing cannot be separated from training in virtue. As Christians especially, we desire to train our students in the skills of reading and thinking well, and in the art of putting virtuous thoughts into words -- true, beautiful, and persuasive words.

The Origins of Classical Writing: The Trivium

The classical method of writing originates with the best thinkers in Western civilization, the ancient Greeks. Since their time, all great thinkers of Western culture right up into the modern era, have used it.

Though originally developed in the pagan worlds of ancient Greece and Rome, the classical method was adopted by Christian scholars from the very start of the Christian Era. Christians were making the best use of the culture into which they were born, in a sense "plundering the Egyptians":

"Whatever has been rightly said by the heathen, we must appropriate to our uses.... For, as the Egyptians had ... vessels and ornaments of gold and silver, and garments, ... in the same way all branches of heathen learning ... contain also liberal instruction which is better adapted to the use of truth, and some most excellent precepts of morality; and some truths in regard even to the worship of the One God are found among them. Now these are, so to speak, their gold and silver, which they did not create themselves, but dug out of the mines of God's providence These, therefore, the Christian ... ought to take away from them, and to devote to their proper use in preaching the gospel.

Their garments, also -- that is, human institutions such as are adapted to that intercourse with men which is indispensable in this life -- we must take and turn to a Christian use." St. Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, Bk II, Ch. 40

Like St. Augustine, all the great theologians, apologists and Christian philosophers through history were classically trained and wrote in classical modes for purposes of exhortation, evangelization, catechism and apologetics. To name just a few, this venerable group includes: The Apostle Paul, St. Gregory Nazianzen, St. John Chrysostom, St. Thomas Aquinas, Martin Luther, John Calvin, St. Thomas More, John Henry Cardinal Newman, and C.S. Lewis.

But what is the classical method of writing that was so admired by so many generations of writers, both pagan and Christian? When we speak of writing classically, we refer first of all to the three main disciplines of the classical Trivium. This "three-way" path is divided into three liberal arts [tools of writing]: Grammar, being the art of understanding and using correctly the basic building blocks of language; Logic, being the art of reasoning correctly; and Rhetoric, being the art of expressing oneself with style and persuasive force. Thus, the Trivium's emphasis is on thought and language, the writer's stock in trade.

With a solid foundation laid in the liberal arts of grammar and logic, rhetoric incorporates the other two ways of the trivium. It gives us the tools we need to tailor our message to our audience, to appeal not just to our readers' or listeners' minds but also to their hearts and souls.

Theory, Analysis and Imitation, and Practice

The pedagogy of the classical world intones a three-note "mantra":

- Theory
- Analysis and Imitation
- Practice

The first note of the mantra calls for the classical student to learn the *theory* behind the writing skills he will use. The second note draws him to *analyze and imitate* the works of great writers, and the third note bids him *practice* while writing compositions of his own.

The origins of this three-part approach can be found in the philosophy of Aristotle, rhetoric's first great "systematizer". Rhetoric, Aristotle asserts, is not a specialized field. It belongs within the general understanding of all people. It is a skill which is used – for better or for worse – by all people as they communicate with each other. Aristotle continues:

" [rhetoric] can plainly be handled systematically, for it is possible to inquire the reason why some speakers succeed... ; and every one will at once agree that such an inquiry is the function of an art." (Rhetoric I.i).

The rhetorical theorist categorizes, classifies, compares and contrasts the various elements of great literature to discover the principles behind successful writing. Aristotle's investigations in the 4th century B.C., led him to establish firmly, for the first time in history, the liberal arts of grammar, logic, and rhetoric. It is this theory which the classical student must learn if he wishes to succeed with his writing.

Not surprisingly, theory makes the most sense when it is viewed in the context of the

works from which it was derived. Great works of literature, naturally, make the best examples of the theory. In *Classical Writing* we term the student's application of theory to the study of literature "analysis and imitation". In analysis, the student first selects a "model" passage from a literary work at hand, and then he studies it in depth. He takes apart every sentence, word by word. He looks at spelling, vocabulary, figures of speech, and at the rhythm and arrangement of words. Moving up a level to analyze whole sentences and paragraphs, he studies logical progression of thought, literary content and the general style of the passage. He will discover how Aesop's fables teach pithy moral lessons, how Homer's epic verse sweeps us along in the tragedies and adventures of noble heroes, and how the scourges of the prophets or the parables of Jesus move us to contemplate a more faithful life.

Analysis completed, the next task is imitation. According to Quintilian:

"It is from authors worthy of our study that we must draw our stock of words, the variety of our figures and our methods of composition, while we must form our minds on the model of every excellence. There can be no doubt that in art no small portion of our task lies in imitation, since, although invention came first and is all-important, it is expedient to imitate whatever has been invented with success. And it is a universal rule of life that we should wish to copy what we approve in others." (X.ii.1-2)

At the most basic level, imitation consists of copywork or dictation. As the student matures, imitation becomes more complex and involves following the content, organization, and/or style of literature. To imitate content, the student would borrow an author's subject matter, for example by retelling the same fable, story or historical event in his own words. To imitate the organization or arrangement of a model, the student would study its outline and approach to the subject and then write a similar composition on a related topic. What may be said about Cincinnatus, for example, could similarly be said about George Washington. Finally, the student learns how to imitate style. He learns why Herodotus is "breezy" and Thucydides "serious" though both are Greek historians treating similar subject matters. Likewise he learns to adopt a more "breezy" or more "serious" tone in his own writing when appropriate.

The ideal writer will learn the theory of his craft, apply that theory in analysis of great works of writing, and imitate that same writing in various ways. In Quintilian's words, the student will "form [his] mind on the model of every excellence."

Finally, the student must also learn how to create his own original and independent compositions. This requires *practice*. For a beginning student, much imitation is practice, and much practice is imitation -- the two meld into one another. But as the student gradually matures in his writing skills, his compositions become increasingly independent. Theory, analysis and imitation arm the student with a battery of tools from which to choose. Practice trains him to use them. It enables the student to apply the rules and his studies of great literary models to the needs of each new writing task. Guidelines and examples can be given, but personal experience in writing -- lots of it -- is the last and best teacher.

To sum up the classical teaching method: theory; analysis and imitation; and practice, practice, practice.

Classical vs. Modern Writing Pedagogy

Parents and students should note that *Classical Writing* differs dramatically from typical modern writing programs. With modern methods, only naturally gifted people learn to write with eloquence and persuasion. A lack of critical thinking about meaningful content, a lack of precision and flexibility in the use of words and sentences, a lack of attention to the fitting organization and content of a composition for a given audience, and an abominable lack of style permeate most modern writing programs. In short, modern writing has radically "dumbed down" the rich, classical heritage of true, beautiful, good and persuasive writing.

In modern writing pedagogy, where "creativity" and "originality" are of the utmost importance, the classical method is thought to hamper student creativity in writing. It is thought to be far too heavy on theory ("stifling rules and regulations") and far too rooted in imitation ("slavish copying"). Just the opposite is true. Why? To find out, we must try to see how all the ancients, including the early Christians, saw the world in a very different way.

The ancients and early Christians understood that great writing, like any great art, was not something transient, but an approach to eternal ideals. Eternal virtues such as truth, beauty, and goodness exist, and it is the purpose of art to approach them. Great writing is great because it reaches for and approaches these ideals.

Practically, the reason we study great writing is because it works. We do not want to reinvent the wheel.

The basic classical premise in any art, is that man in his creativity is trying to imitate creation, the ultimate product of divine creativity. From studies of creation, the ancient Greeks discerned that the world is rationally ordered, that it works according to fixed laws, principles and forms. The aim of Art, including the art of writing, was the imitation of persisting objective forms, an emulation of that which is permanent and ordered. The art of rhetoric was particularly concerned with the ideal -- with what "ought to be" -- with the virtues of truth, beauty and goodness. Hence the chief purpose of writing is to communicate those virtues. For the Church Fathers, it was no different. Their writing sought to communicate God's truth, beauty and goodness.

Truth does not change with the passing of many generations of men; "originality" and "creativity" therefore must take a back seat. Truth, which is rooted in the Creator, is not something we make up to suit our own preferences. There are universal standards to which it conforms. The same goes for goodness and beauty, and for all virtue. New and different ways of teaching and practicing the art of writing are not to be commended simply because they are new and different. Rather, they must be judged on the basis of their conformity to divine principles of order as well as on the basis of the character of the writers they turn out.

The *Progymnasmata*

Over the centuries, classical teachers built up a series of "preliminary exercises" in rhetorical composition. These classical Greek *progymnasmata* provide the central core around which *Classical Writing* is organized.

The *progymnasmata* are a sequenced series of writing patterns or outlines, which show how to put thoughts together and arrange them for a given rhetorical purpose. They begin, for

the youngest student, with the simple retelling of fables and short narrative stories. From there, the student gradually moves on to exercises in simple explanation and persuasion. Each exercise features a fixed outline and carefully specified subject matter. The structure of the sequence prevents much of the frustration and "writer's block" which is so common in a child taught by modern, unstructured, "creative" methods. Finally, the most advanced exercises of the *progymnasmata* combine elements of the earlier exercises to create increasingly complex, effective compositions. The beauty of the *progymnasmata* is that they teach the virtues of writing carefully and systematically, all the while prompting the student to deal with challenging issues of thought and expression.

As he matures in skill, confidence, and ability to think, the student is given more and more freedom to develop his own individual style and preferences in argument and organization. By the time he has reached the most advanced *progymnasmata*, he has developed good writing habits, has learned a variety of techniques, persuasive, expository and creative, and is given the freedom to compose his own original work.

How This Program Works

This book is the first volume in the *Classical Writing* series. Rooted in the *progymnasmata*, each of the *Classical Writing* volumes features a famous classical writer:

- Book I: Aesop - beginning retelling of fables
- Book II: Homer - fable and narrative
- Book III: Diogenes - proverb, chreia [anecdote]
- Book IV: Herodotus - refutation, confirmation
- Book V: Plato - commonplace
- Book VI: Plutarch - praise, blame, comparison
- Book VII: Virgil- description
- Book VIII: Thucydides - characterization
- Book IX: Demosthenes - thesis
- Book X: Cicero - law
- Book XI: Aristotle - declamation

Our central goals for the student of *Classical Writing* are that he learns to identify and clarify his message, and craft the language into a form which is well suited for a particular audience's experience, knowledge and prejudices. To accomplish these goals, we draw directly on the Trivial Arts of grammar, logic, and rhetoric; and we adopt the classical pedagogy of theory, analysis and imitation, and practice.

The series as a whole is designed to teach writing from beginning skills through high school. The books are sequential, but are meant neither to correspond to grade level nor to be used at the pace of exactly one volume per year. Students of all ages should begin at the beginning and progress at their own pace. The younger student will likely spend a couple of years altogether with the two beginning volumes. A middle school student should spend a few months with Book I, then proceed into an intensive study of writing with Books II through VI at a pace which best suits him. An older student may start in either Book I or Book II.

The main components of the *Classical Writing* curriculum common to each book are:

- 1) Systematic instruction in applied theory
- 2) Analysis & Imitation of great works of writing
- 3) Writing Projects and original compositions built around the *progymnasmata*

Theory.

For the theory, we assume the student will study the following "outside" courses concurrent with *Classical Writing*. As an applied classical writing course, this curriculum will supplement these outside theoretical courses with additional concepts whenever necessary. We recommend the following courses.

- ❑ Harvey's Grammars (available from Mott Media) are the most rigorous courses of English grammar we have yet found. The study of Harvey's, or an equivalent intensive grammar course, should begin concurrent with *Classical Writing, Book II - Homer*.
- ❑ A course in traditional Aristotelian logic, such as the one published by Martin Cothran of Memoria Press, should begin when the student has completed a solid grammar course, but no later than *Book IV - Herodotus*.
- ❑ A course in classical rhetoric, such as the one by Edward Corbett, *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student* (Oxford), or an equivalent rhetoric course, should be begun as soon as the student has completed logic, but no later than *Classical Writing, Book VII - Virgil*.

Models.

Only the best models from literature, religion, history, and science are used in *Classical Writing*. The student analyzes, imitates and practices writing, all the while living and breathing the thoughts and words of the best writers of all time.

Analysis & Imitation.

For Analysis & Imitation we emphasize and apply the language arts skills which the student needs to study at various levels. From spelling and basic punctuation for the beginner, to vocabulary and intensive grammar for the mid- to upper-elementary student, to advanced techniques in word usage, how to read an audience, ways of arguing, and word-crafting style for the high school student, we show how to teach the key classical skills.

Practice.

Given the Analysis & Imitation of great models as a foundation, we work on the student's ability to write his own complete original compositions. Our Writing Projects are drawn directly from the classical *progymnasmata* and encourage practice, practice, practice.

How This Book Works

Book I - Aesop is the first book in the *Classical Writing* series. It is designed for the beginning writer and emphasizes simple work on the first *progymnasma*, Fable. (Fable will be continued in *Book II - Homer*, along with the slightly more complicated *progymnasma*, Narrative.)

In *Book I* we take the Greek fable writer, Aesop, as our mascot. Aesop's simple narratives are easy for beginning writers to imitate.

"Their pupils should learn to paraphrase Aesop's fables, the natural successors of the fairy stories of the nursery, in simple and restrained language and subsequently to set down this paraphrase in writing with the same simplicity of

style: they should begin by analysing each verse, then give its meaning in different language, and finally proceed to a freer paraphrase in which they will be permitted now to abridge and now to embellish the original, so far as this may be done without losing the poet's meaning. This is no easy task even for the expert instructor, and the pupil who handles it successfully will be capable of learning everything." Quintilian (I.ix.2-3)

A variety of narrative models are recommended for use with *Classical Writing - Aesop*. You may select models from your own resources, or, for your convenience, use the models included in the model booklets published in the *Classical Writing* series itself. Choose for your models Aesop's fables, of course, as well as Bible stories, historical legends, and fairy tales. Choose a variety of models for your child to work with, adapting your selections to fit your child's Writing Projects with his other studies. [See the chapter on Models.]

At this level Analysis & Imitation focuses on very basic word and sentence level skills, including phonics, spelling, basic capitalization and punctuation, and beginning grammar. For imitation, students do copywork or easy dictation. Analysis & Imitation of models is accomplished through a four days per week, 30 minutes per day, routine.

For the beginner we feature three simple Writing Projects. In each project the child is expected to produce, through much practice, a series of complete short compositions:

- 1) retelling a simple narrative
- 2) retelling a simple narrative with dialogue
- 3) retelling a simple narrative with descriptive details

A second session of 30-40 minutes per day, four days a week, accommodates the Writing Projects, for a total of a little over an hour a day to be dedicated to the program at the beginner level.

Who Would Benefit from this Book?

Classical Writing - Aesop is designed with the beginner in mind, the student who has done no writing before. For maximum benefit from this program the child should be able to read at a near-independent reading level. We also expect that the beginning student will be studying spelling, handwriting, and typing if possible, concurrent with this course. The little bit of grammar that is needed is provided.

Expect to teach *Classical Writing* as an actively participating parent. This program is not self-teaching to the student. Throughout all stages, and especially in the earliest stages, the teaching parent is expected to be at hand, actively teaching for the duration of both the Analysis & Imitation session and for the Writing Project portion of the student's daily lessons. There is great virtue in lovingly and personally teaching the child entrusted to you, and your child will learn best if you work directly with him.

Chapter Two

Models

When we speak of a "model" in the *Classical Writing* curriculum, we are referring to a select paragraph or two of excellent writing worthy of analysis and imitation for content, arrangement and style. For younger students, in this book, this could be a short tale, a fable, or a selection of writing taken from a longer narrative.

Traditional tales compose the bulk of our selections used for models in *Classical Writing* for beginning students. Children's imaginations come to life with tales of bold knights, magic castles, giants, and evil wizards. These tales have well-defined plots containing good or evil characters and instill morality in children by engaging both their minds and their hearts without preaching at them. Four forms of traditional tales are: fables, folk tales, myths, and legends. These tales have been told and retold for countless generations.

Fables

Fables are brief allegorical narratives, in verse or prose. The most legendary fabulist is Aesop. Most scholars agree that he was born about 620 B.C. and was by birth a slave. Aesop's legacy, his fables, portray simple stories of animals who speak, act and have the characteristics of people while still retaining their stereotypical animal traits. Each fable teaches a concise moral lesson. These stories are short. Consistently, they conclude by bringing us to the simple truths that often we miss in everyday life. The beauty in using fables at this stage of writing, apart from their being short and simple, lies in their moral value. In reading Aesop's fables children learn to think about moral values and moral issues, and they enhance their cultural literacy by retaining in their minds a storehouse of fables for later use in their reading and writing. His fables easy and accessible to children who naturally are attracted to his simple and quite often humorous stories about creatures.

Folk Tales

The Three Billy Goats Gruff, Cinderella, or Snow White are all examples of folk tales. They deal with adventures, with the plausible and the implausible disguised in human or animal form. In their simplicity the characters of these tales are either evil or good people. In the end good always wins, which reinforces childhood's firm belief that there is order and reason in life, that virtue ultimately wins. "Once upon a time in a far away land there lived a....," is the familiar time and setting common to this kind of tales. Folk tales were passed down orally from generation to generation. The stories circulated in consistent moral form, yet shifting slightly in characters and setting as each teller would slightly alter the words. Values which spring from a culture over time are the focus and life of folk tales. Attempting to explain and understand the natural and spiritual world, their themes focus on life's puzzling questions of good and evil, of life and death.

Myths

Myths tell about the creation and origin of the world, and why the world is the way it is. These stories are as old as man himself. Myths portray the ancient gods and goddesses. They give human emotions and qualities to the gods who become the heroes and heroines

aiding men in their understanding of the world, helping men wrestle with questions of fate, the nature of knowledge, the finality of death, and the mystery of love. Mythical literature exemplifies truth in the form of symbols and allegories to explain the human condition and the reason for human suffering.

Why do we as Christians read pagan myths? Like folk tales, these accounts ascribe high moral value and purpose to human life. Their consistent questions of life cause deep reflection in their readers. Also, with their quest for Truth in the abstract, the ancient Greek myths are a familiar part of the intellectual heritage of Western society. Along with the materials of the Old Testament and New Testament, Greek mythology supplies a variety of names, situations and treasures of information which serve as the foundation for Western thought, culture and literature.

As Christians, naturally we do not embrace the spirituality of these accounts; however, we need not shy away from them merely because they were part of an antiquated religious system. The danger of propagating paganism through these myths is negligible. Greek myths have no religious structure to reinforce them. Greek religion never became institutionalized beyond the Greek city-state. This mythology is a complicated system of formalized storytelling, which has for millennia been bereft of religious associations, while its transcendental questions of life, death and man's destiny remain pertinent to mankind of every historical age. When reading English literary classics, familiarity with classical Greek mythological names and references is a necessity. Greek gods and goddesses serve as literary personifications of character traits in Post-Renaissance English and European literature. If the aim is a classical education, our children must be acquainted with these delightful, sometimes frightening, but most entertaining, deities of Greece. Should they ever aspire to read Milton or Dante, this acquaintance is essential.

Legends

Legends, unlike myths and folk tales, portray real historical figures. The historical facts have been altered or perhaps exaggerated, and sometimes intertwined with magic and sorcery. These stories clearly delineate the good and the bad characters of the story and spur the readers on to moral conduct and right living. This legendary intermixture of fact and hyperbole sets them apart from pure myth or popular tales. The tales, which have been spun around the persona of King Arthur and his noble Knights, of Robin Hood and his Merry Men, and even of young George Washington with his wayward axe and truthful tongue, are legends which, with their monolithic approach to morality, inspire us to strive for the good, to search for truth and to always do what is right.

Suitable Models For Beginners

This volume is primarily dedicated to Aesop's fables, because of their simplicity and brevity. Other tales, shorter animal tales and familiar fairy stories such as

The Ginger Bread Boy
Henny Penny
The Three Little Pigs
The Three Billy Goats Gruff
Goldilocks and the Three Bears
The Little Red Hen

are also excellent models for beginning writers to work with. Likewise, famous and legendary characters are also a good choice of narrative. To name a few:

<u>Ancient History</u>	<u>Medieval History</u>	<u>Renaissance and Reformation History</u>	<u>Modern History</u>
Hercules	King Arthur	Leonardo Da Vinci	Father Kino
Perseus	Robin Hood	Raphael	Cortez
Jason	Charlemagne	Queen Isabella	American Founding Fathers
Odysseus	Gengis Kahn	Christopher Columbus	Jesse James
Achilles	Marco Polo	Pocahontas	Johnny Appleseed
Aeneas	Eric the Red	Michelangelo	Pecos Bill
Romulus and Remus	St. Augustine	Savanarola	Paul Bunyan
Julius Caesar	St. Patrick	Leo X	John Henry
Augustus Caesar	St. Francis	Thomas More	Susan B. Anthony
St. Ignatius	St. Thomas	Henry VIII	Harriet Tubman
Constantine	Aquinas	Martin Luther	Frederick Douglass
St. Basil	Joan of Arc	John Calvin	Martin Luther King Jr.
	John Wycliffe		

In mythology, we encourage you to pursue stories that complement your history studies. Work with tales of the Greco-Roman deities when studying Ancient history, and concentrate more on the Norse gods when studying Vikings and the Middle Ages.

Where to Obtain Models

There are many options for finding suitable models for imitation for *Classical Writing*:

Option 1 - Use *Classical Writing* model resources.

For those who prefer to have their writing curriculum all together and ready to go, the *Classical Writing* series includes a variety of model resources for just that purpose.

- To get you started, we have included six of Aesop's fables in an appendix to this book.
- You can download additional free models directly from the Web in pdf format, ready to print. Files are available at the Classical Co-op: <http://www.classicalco-op.com>. (You will need the free Adobe Acrobat reader software to use pdf files.) Print out as many copies as you need for your children and yourself.
- Or, you can purchase pre-printed packages of models to use with your students. Purchase as many model packages as you need for each student to have his own copy. You may also want model copies for yourself.

By printing yourself or buying inexpensive models packets, you can in good conscience mark them up with your teaching notes and have your students write on them.

Option 2 - Download traditional tales off the Internet.

On the Internet are many excellent web sites with folklore, fairy tales, legends, and myths. The versions online are usually from public domain (copyright free) and out-of-print books. We offer just a few links to some of our favorite sites:

Hans Christian Andersen's Fairy Tales
<http://hca.gilead.org.il/>

Aesop's Fables translated by Jacobs
http://www.pagebypagebooks.com/aesop/aesops_fables/

Baldwin's Fairy Stories, Fables and Famous Stories from History
<http://www.mainlesson.com/>

Paul Bunyan
<http://www.paulbunyantrail.com/>

Old Mother West Wind tales
<http://www.boop.org/jan/omww/>

American Tall Tales
<http://www.americanfolklore.net>

Fairy Tales and Legends
<http://www.belinus.co.uk.uk>

The immediate advantage to printing your tales off the web is that you have ready access to a great variety of stories. Any time you like, you can make a copy of this week's model. Your children can mark up their copy. If the model page somehow gets messed up, you just print out another one. Internet stories are free except for the ink and paper you use for reproduction. The only disadvantage to this approach, a very minor one, is that you need to take the time to look for stories in preparation for your week, rather than have a story collection for your school year which is all ready to use.

Option 3 - Use what you already have at home on your shelves.

Using *Classical Writing* resources or printing off the Internet can be especially convenient ways to obtain models. Also convenient is to use whatever you have at home already. Most homes have many books which would serve well as models for writing practice for beginners. Look through your preschool fairytale and nursery tale books and you will find many short traditional tales suitable for beginning writing imitation. From your homeschool collection, make use of history books, science or nature study texts, Bibles, Bible story books, books about saints and heroes in history, and picture story books. Only well-written short narrative stories will do.

Option 4 - Build your home library.

A well-stocked home library seems to be part of most homeschoolers' "musts". We recommend the following versions of traditional tales for use with *Classical Writing* for the

elementary school years:

- your favorite children's Bible
- Arnold Lobel's *Aesop's Fables*
- Milo Winter's *Aesop For Children*
- D'Aulaire's *Greek Myths, Norse Myths, Trolls*
- D'Aulaire's stories of Americans: *Benjamin Franklin, Abraham Lincoln*
- *Complete Grimm's Fairy Tales*
- American tall tales retold by Stephen Kellogg, such as *Pecos Bill, Paul Bunyan, Johnny Appleseed*
- Stories of the saints by Tomie de Paola
- *The Great Big Treasury* of Beatrix Potter
- *Winnie-the-Pooh* by A. A. Milne
- William Bennett's *The Book of Virtues*

It is not necessary that you buy any or all of these. However they are excellent books, well worth having in your personal library. Most of the books listed above are in print. If for some reason you cannot buy them new, check your local used bookstore or shop the used book market on the Internet. Two of our favorite search sites for used books online are:

<http://www.addall.com>

<http://www.abebooks.com>

The only real disadvantage to using beautifully bound books is that you will likely be hesitant to mark them up. Either prepare ahead and photocopy the story of the week so it is ready for your child, or as part of your preparation for the week, scan or type the story on the computer and print it.

Option 5 - Choose your model selections from books at your local library.

At your local library you can obtain all of the above mentioned books and many more. Look for the highest quality authors and illustrators. Read some of the text yourself to see if the language is worth your children imitating it. Unfortunately, many modern retellings of traditional tales are done very poorly as far as the language is concerned. Take the time to find retellers and illustrators you like.

Of course, for library books, you simply cannot mark up the text. Photocopy, scan or type the story yourself.

Selecting Models

For beginning writers, look for the following traits in your models:

- language your child understands
- a simple story sequence
- a story with not too many details
- a simple point to the story
- an interesting story which will engage the child, or a story familiar to the child

If you choose a selection from a longer narrative, choose a selection which will stand on its own and still make a little story. Make it a selection appropriate to the skills you are working on in the writing projects:

- if description, choose a descriptive passage
- if dialogue, pick a passage with dialogue

Make the selection short, as short as integrity of content will allow. Here is an example of a short descriptive selection from H. C. Andersen's tale, *The Ugly Duckling*:

Everything looked beautiful, in the freshness of early spring. From a thicket close by came three beautiful white swans, rustling their feathers, and swimming lightly over the smooth water. The duckling remembered the lovely birds, and felt more strangely unhappy than ever.

"I will fly to those royal birds," he exclaimed, "and they will kill me, because I am so ugly, and dare to approach them; but it does not matter: better be killed by them than pecked by the ducks, beaten by the hens, pushed about by the maiden who feeds the poultry, or starved with hunger in the winter." Then he flew to the water, and swam towards the beautiful swans. The moment they espied the stranger, they rushed to meet him with outstretched wings.

"Kill me," said the poor bird; and he bent his head down to the surface of the water, and awaited death.

But what did he see in the clear stream below? His own image; no longer a dark, gray bird, ugly and disagreeable to look at, but a graceful and beautiful swan. To be born in a duck's nest, in a farmyard, is of no consequence to a bird, if it is hatched from a swan's egg. He now felt glad at having suffered sorrow and trouble, because it enabled him to enjoy so much better all the pleasure and happiness around him; for the great swans swam round the new-comer, and stroked his neck with their beaks, as a welcome.

Similarly, here is an example of a short dialogue selection from H. C. Andersen's tale, *The Swineherd*:

Thus the prince was appointed imperial swineherd, and as such he lived in a wretchedly small room near the pigsty; there he worked all day long, and when it was night he had made a pretty little pot. There were little bells round the rim, and when the water began to boil in it, the bells began to play the old tune:

"A jolly old sow once lived in a sty,
Three little piggies had she," &c.

But what was more wonderful was that, when one put a finger into the steam rising from the pot, one could at once smell what meals they were preparing on every fire in the whole town. That was indeed much more remarkable than the rose. When the princess with her ladies passed by and heard the tune, she stopped and looked quite pleased, for she also could play it—in fact, it was the only tune she could play, and she played it with one finger.

"That is the tune I know," she exclaimed. "He must be a well-educated

swineherd. Go and ask him how much the instrument is."

One of the ladies had to go and ask; but she put on pattens.

"What will you take for your pot?" asked the lady.

"I will have ten kisses from the princess," said the swineherd.

"God forbid," said the lady.

"Well, I cannot sell it for less," replied the swineherd.

"What did he say?" said the princess.

"I really cannot tell you," replied the lady.

"You can whisper it into my ear."

"It is very naughty," said the princess, and walked off.

But when she had gone a little distance, the bells rang again so sweetly:

"A jolly old sow once lived in a sty,
Three little piggies had she," &c.

"Ask him," said the princess, "if he will be satisfied with ten kisses from one of my ladies."

"No, thank you," said the swineherd: "ten kisses from the princess, or I keep my pot."

"That is tiresome," said the princess. "But you must stand before me, so that nobody can see it."

The ladies placed themselves in front of her and spread out their dresses, and she gave the swineherd ten kisses and received the pot.

Preparing Models

As you use your model to teach, mark it up as necessary. This may include emphasizing words or underlining sentences. You may want to mark punctuation or capital letters if those require special attention. Mark off a part of the model to be used for simple copywork or dictation. In short, if you have a markable copy of your model, do not be afraid to work with it based on the tasks before you. For more on how to use your model, see the Analysis & Imitation and Writing Project sections below.

Chapter Three

Analysis & Imitation

In *Classical Writing* we term the application of theory to the study of great literary models Analysis & Imitation. At the beginning level, analysis involves basic reading skills, word skills, and sentence skills. Beginning imitation is simple reproduction: copywork and dictation. Set aside 30 minutes or so each day, four days a week, for Analysis & Imitation of literary models.

The Weekly Routine for *Classical Writing* - Aesop

In teaching Analysis & Imitation skills, we are teaching to a routine. That is, we want students slowly to develop the ability to take *any* literary selection and work with it in such a way that they learn how it accomplishes its own particular literary excellence. To do this requires that students build up a standard set of tools and “habits of mind” which they can draw upon systematically when faced with any new model. When approaching any great model, they work through a standard weekly routine to analyze and imitate it. At the beginning level, routine Analysis & Imitation of models is necessarily very simple. Over time, we will slowly build up and elaborate the word and sentence skills we are learning now.

Start by establishing a standard four day weekly routine for beginning writers. At higher levels, we will gradually modify and extend this schedule to incorporate other kinds of model work.

The Weekly Routine Analysis & Imitation for <i>Classical Writing</i> - Aesop			
Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
Introduce the Model	Word Skills	Sentence Skills	Copywork or Easy Dictation

On Day 1, introduce the model and work to understand and appreciate it. The key here is to enjoy good stories! On Days 2 and 3, focus on words and sentences. Finally, when young children are very familiar with the model, use it as the basis of copywork or easy dictation. This practice in reproduction will ingrain the words and phrases of the work in the children’s minds, as well as give them practice writing words and sentences, capitalizing, and punctuating.

Everything you need to teach each day of the beginner’s weekly routine is given below, day by day.

Teacher Preparation

The models you have chosen will serve as the basis for Analysis & Imitation. Each week choose a new model. For example, you might spend six weeks on Aesop's fables, then five weeks on Bible stories, then four weeks on historical legends or lives of the saints. For convenience, select from the *Classical Writing* models booklets. Or, make selections from your own bookshelves. Work only with the very best literature written in the best English language. See Chapter 2 for more information on selecting models.

Next, preview all the Analysis & Imitation skills to be taught. You will want to place your child at the appropriate skill level for word skills, sentence skills, and copywork or dictation. Over time, as you continue to work with more models, your child's skills will improve and you will move up through the skill levels in each area.

Each week, verify your current level of Analysis & Imitation skills, adjust as necessary, and review any new concepts to teach. Be sure you understand the concepts well yourself. You will also want to analyze the weekly model yourself and mark it up as necessary before beginning to teach. Underline words or sentences on which to focus and make any notes on the content or special features of the model. Make one or more copies for yourself and your student(s).

Day 1 – Introduce the Model

The daily routine for Day 1 is the same for all students in *Classical Writing - Aesop*: Introduce the Model.

Daily Routine for Day 1 Introduce the Model
• Background • Reading • Vocabulary • Discussion

Background

Read the introductory essay (in the *Classical Writing* model books) or other background information yourself and note the information you would like to share with your children. Introduce the author, for example, and note when and where the models were written. You may also begin to point out the differences in length, genre, and purpose of different types of writing. By genre, we mean the type of writing: fable, fairy tale, legend, myth, Bible story, biography, history, etc. The different purposes of writing are usually determined by the author's original historical setting. Why was he writing? What was his message? Who was his audience?

Each week, introduce to the student the specific new model to be studied. Note the title. What do you think this writing will be about? What is the subject matter? Give children any additional background information they may need to understand the selection they will be working with this week. Explain any historical event or cultural practice that may be unfamiliar to the child. Ask if the selection raises any questions in his mind or reminds him of anything familiar.

Reading

It is very important that you read the model carefully with young readers! Do not count on them to know what it says. (It is easy to forget that young children cannot read as well as we adults can!) As you read aloud, pay attention to elocution, or how you speak. Require children, when they read aloud, to pronounce each word correctly and to enunciate clearly. In the early days of classical education, learning to speak properly and reading out loud was just as important as learning to comprehend the letters, words, and their meanings. Read the passage through three or more times with your student. After reading the passage once or twice aloud yourself, ask the students to join with you as you read together. Then have each student read out loud individually. You may need to provide ongoing assistance with reading as the student works with the model over the course of the week, especially if his reading skills do not yet enable him to be fully independent. For readers who are comfortable with the material, give attention to which words or phrases are stressed and note pauses. This is a good time to gently call attention to how different punctuation marks, such as commas, semi-colons, and periods, call for appropriate pauses while reading. Aim for animated and interesting reading with variety in tone and volume.

Vocabulary

Explain any unfamiliar words to the child, especially as they are used in context. If necessary, look up words in the dictionary together to find out their meanings. Be especially alert to words that are easily confused by the student such as homonyms and other similar-sounding words.

Discussion

Discuss the meaning of the model to be sure students understand it fully. Discuss the characters, the plot, the action, and the outcome. Are there any moral issues you would like to comment on?

A good test of the child's comprehension is to have him briefly narrate or retell the story to you. If the child is not sure of the flow of the action, the characters, or how the plot moves forward, prompt him by asking questions like:

- ◆ who are the main characters?
- ◆ what is the problem/crisis or what does the main character want?
- ◆ how is the problem solved?
- ◆ what is the point of the story?

Let students express their own views and impressions, but do not be afraid to point things out and give your own opinion, too. Teachers are not just prompts for children's self-expression. Children look to their teacher to provide guidance.

Do try to note both good and bad things about the selection. If you like the model, say so, but try to find any details that are troublesome or that you think might be improved upon or done differently. If you dislike the model, say so, but try to note its good points. One of the primary goals of working with model literature is to learn to appreciate quality writing. This involves training our faculties of discernment and discrimination. Later, students will need to turn this trained faculty on their own writing, to be critical of it and to improve it wherever possible. Having exercised their critical faculties on the works of great writers, we can hope that they will become comfortable holding their own work up to the highest standards. Young writers are sometimes easily discouraged. When they see that even the best writers are not perfect, they may find it less of a personal affront to acknowledge that their own writing usually need work, too.

Students should learn to enjoy what they read and write. Our goal, even with young children, is to cultivate their taste and a discerning ear and eye.

Day 2 – Word Skills – Phonics & Spelling

On Day 2, work with the words in your model. For beginning writers, this means working with phonics and spelling.

Overview for Day 2 Word Skills – Phonics & Spelling			
<i>Skill Levels & Suggested Lessons</i>		<i>Models</i>	<i>Daily Routine</i>
Skill Level 1	Word Analysis for Phonics	Underline words in models to use for phonics and/or spelling analysis.	• Read & analyze phonics • Copy words
Skill Level 2	Word Analysis for Spelling		• Analyze & copy spelling words • Compare related words
Skill Level 3	Beginning Dictionary Skills • Review the Alphabet • Alphabetical Order • Using the Dictionary		• Alphabetize spelling words • Look them up

We assume you will be teaching phonics and spelling (as well as handwriting) outside of *Classical Writing*. However, it is a good idea to use your models for extra practice with words in the context of real reading and writing. Take one day a week in the Analysis & Imitation routine (Day 2) to do that.

Since the skill level of students in phonics and spelling varies considerably from student to student, we offer three Skill Levels in developing the word analysis routine for Day 2. Place your child according to his current skill, and slowly graduate him to the next level when he is ready. You will probably spend weeks to months at each step before moving up.

Each step is cumulative. This means that new skills are always added on to those that have been learned and practiced previously. For example, students who have worked their way up to Skill Level 3, and who are now working on dictionary skills, will still also peruse the model for unfamiliar phonograms or for difficult spelling words. It is good to keep in mind that the difficulty of the model will determine how much time you may need to spend applying skills learned at previous levels. A model with difficult words will require all students to give time to phonics and spelling.

Ultimately, your goal is to train students to do a routine phonics and spelling analysis on any model, using the dictionary whenever needed.

Skill Level 1 – Word Analysis for Phonics

The first skill level for words is designed for children who are not yet fully independent readers.

The general approach we recommend for phonics and spelling analysis is the *Writing Road to Reading* (WRTR) method developed by Romalda Spalding. Many classical educators use a variant of this system to teach phonics, reading, and spelling, and we highly recommend it. There are three basic components of word analysis in this system.

First, break the word out into syllables, separating each syllable by a space when you write the word out for analysis.

Second, mark all the phonetic “pieces” or phonograms of the word. So, for example, consonant combinations such as wh, ch, th, or ng would be phonograms, as would vowel combinations such as ea, oa, au. Each two-letter phonogram should be marked with an underline to indicate that those letters do not each have single sounds, but work together to make one sound. You can also mark “silent final e’s” and other phonetic aspects of the word. Use double underlines or circles to note irregular or difficult spellings, and an “x” over a vowel to indicate an irregular sound. Some people use numbers over vowel combinations to indicate which vowel sound it carries, if there are several options. All markings are explained in the Spalding book or in other curriculum materials that have developed around this method.

Third, discuss the application of spelling rules as they apply to the word being analyzed. This may include rules for vowels, doubling of consonants, endings, using i before e, etc.

Daily Routine for Day 2 – Skill Level 1 Working on Word Analysis for Phonics
• Read & Analyze for Phonics • Copy Words

Read & Analyze for Phonics

Read through the model with the child and stop at any word he has difficulty reading. Do a *Writing Road to Reading* type analysis and mark-up of the word so that he can see how it is put together phonetically.

Copy Words

Children may copy difficult words two or three times each, saying them out loud, for extra practice.

Another valuable exercise is for children to trace the letters with their fingers on their desks while saying the letters of the proper spelling aloud. This is particularly helpful for the youngest pencil-allergic children to whom writing a word three times is equivalent to torture!

Skill Level 2 – Word Analysis for Spelling

Once children are reading comfortably, concentrate on spelling.

Daily Routine for Day 2 – Skill Level 2 Working on Word Analysis for Spelling
• Analyze & Copy Spelling Words • Compare Related Words

Analyze & Copy Spelling Words

Pick out words from the model at the child's spelling level. Use your best judgment. Pick out as many words as the child can comfortably handle at one time. We suggest starting with five to ten words. Underline these words in the model.

Practice reading, analyzing, and marking these words according to *Writing Road to Reading* methods, one at a time. Then the child may copy them, or you may dictate as a spelling test. If desired for extra practice, add spelling words from models to your regular spelling list for the week.

When children begin dictation (see Day 4), pick out words from the model that you anticipate will be difficult for them to spell. Work with these words "proactively," using the spelling analysis *before* children will be required to write the words from dictation later in the week.

Compare Related Words

Another good exercise in word analysis for spelling is to compare related words which are phonetically similar (know, known, knot) or derivative (know, knowing, known, knew), and

to note any homonyms or closely pronounced words that may cause difficulties in spelling (our, are, hour; where, were).

Skill Level 3 – Beginning Dictionary Skills

When students become comfortable with the process for analyzing and marking spelling words, begin to teach dictionary skills. You may take several weeks to do this. Then continue to practice.

Be sure to have one or more good dictionaries on hand. The first priority is to buy a good school or student's dictionary. Look carefully before you buy. Watch especially for visual clarity (print size, font size, style, spacing) and a good selection of words. We like *The Oxford School Dictionary*. Also handy are a good college dictionary (for example, Webster's or American Heritage) and "pocket" dictionaries, one for each student to keep with him while reading and writing. Looking ahead to future work in vocabulary building, choose dictionaries which include etymological information on Latin and Greek roots, and on word origins wherever possible.

Suggested Lessons

To teach students the concepts and skills they need to use a dictionary, you will need to give a series of instructional lessons. We have included suggestions below for how to teach, but you should feel free to improvise to meet the needs and capacities of your students.

Note: the suggested lessons below are not necessarily designed to be taught one at a time. Rather, each encapsulates a single concept. You may teach as many lessons as your child can handle at a time, or spread out the introduction of new material to allow as much practice with each concept as is necessary for the child to gain familiarity with it before moving on. (Complete mastery is not necessary before moving on, because each concept will continue to be practiced again and again in the Daily Routine.) You as teacher have discretion. Move quickly through easy lessons, slow down for harder lessons. Teach when you have time to teach. Remember, since you are teaching to a routine, you will continue to practice all skills week after week. Skill Levels are cumulative.

Review the Alphabet.

Practice saying the alphabet over and over. Can you say it backwards? Write it down and, looking at the letters, say it backwards. Practice this several times.

Now, start in the middle somewhere and say the letters going forward and backward. Practice in sets, according to the abc's song: abcd efg hijk lmnop qrs tuv wx yz.

Alphabetical Order.

Note that words are made up of a sequence of letters in order, first, second, third, etc. Explain alphabetical order. Practice putting the spelling words of the week in alphabetical order.

Using the Dictionary.

Next, inspect a dictionary and show children how it is organized by first letter, second letter,

etc. Explain how to look up a word in the dictionary. Practice looking up spelling words together and verifying their spelling. You will note that you have to look up the root word without endings. You will also note that some words used in literature are not quite standard English. Models may use some old-fashioned words or British versus American spellings. Explain these differences.

Note: Students will soon begin to explore roots, suffixes (endings), and other vocabulary skills. For now, give them all help necessary to use the dictionary.

Encourage students to look up words in the dictionary whenever they are unsure of a spelling. You might allow them to do this during dictation, for example (see Day 4). Note that children must have some idea how to spell a word before they can look it up in a dictionary.

Optional Extensions.

There are a variety of optional extensions which can be incorporated for the advancing student. The basic goal is for students to understand how to use a dictionary, but you can also explain the use of a spelling dictionary if you have one, or the spell-checker on a word processor. Giving alphabetization tasks is also a good idea, whether word lists, or a stack of business cards to be sorted by last name, or a filing job.

Daily Routine for Day 2 – Skill Level 3

Working on Dictionary Skills

- Analyze & Copy Spelling Words
- Compare Related Words
- Alphabetize Spelling Words
- Look Them Up
- Use the Dictionary

Use the Dictionary

Students should also be using the dictionary generally to aid in spelling: to check words from the model, to help with dictation (see Day 4), and to establish a good habit when writing (see the Writing Project).

Day 3 – Sentence Skills – Simple Grammar

As soon as they begin to read and write, children should begin the study of grammar, or the patterns and rules of language. At the beginning stage, we start with the most basic skills of identifying sentences, working with capitalization and punctuation, and memorizing the eight parts of speech.

No outside materials are required for teaching the following grammar concepts. However, it is very important that the teacher herself know English grammar well, or be learning it now for future teaching. In Classical Writing, grammar instruction becomes intensive very

quickly. We recommend Harvey's grammar texts:

- ❑ *Harvey's Elementary Grammar and Composition*
- ❑ *Harvey's Revised English Grammar*

Another good resource is the *Rod and Staff English Handbook*. These are all inexpensive references and more than worthwhile purchases. Acquire them now, and begin to educate yourself!

Note: It is certainly possible to use another grammar program with *Classical Writing*, so long as it covers the same breadth and depth of material as covered in Harvey's, and so long as you can easily find your own way around in it. Terminology varies somewhat from text to text.

Overview for Day 3 Sentence Skills – Simple Grammar			
<i>Skill Levels & Suggested Lessons</i>		<i>Models</i>	<i>Daily Routine</i>
Skill Level 1	Sentences • Intro to a Book • Three Ways to Tell a Sentence • Four Functional Types of Sentences • Beginning Capital & End Punctuation	Choose one paragraph to work with sentences.	▪ Identify Sentences ▪ Classify Sentences
Skill Level 2	Capitalization and Simple Punctuation • Capitalization • How to Write Dates • Simple Punctuation	Choose one paragraph to work with capitals & punctuation.	• Locate all capitals & punctuation.
Skill Level 3	Simple Quotes • Simple Direct Quotes • How to Capitalize & Punctuate • Two Other Ways	Underline sentences with direct quotes.	• Work with quotes.

Skill Level 4	Introduction to Grammar • Eight Parts of Speech • Nouns • Pronouns • Verbs • Modifiers • Adjectives • Adverbs • Prepositions • Conjunctions • Interjections	Underline words to parse (determine part of speech).	• List parts of speech. • Find all ____'s. • What part of speech is this?
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Skill Level 1 – Sentences

All beginners should start at Skill Level 1 and spend at least several weeks there, working through the suggested lessons and practicing with the Daily Routine, before advancing. Move to the next Skill Level whenever you are ready to add new material.

Suggested Lessons

Introduction to a Book.

Take a few minutes with your child to explore the details of how a book is organized. Note the cover, title page, title, author, publisher, and date. Note the table of contents, a foreword or preface, and any other front matter. Flip to the back of the book and find an index, glossary, bibliography, or other end matter.

Now look at the substantive content in the middle of the book. Show students how letters make up words (with spaces in between); words make up sentences (identified by capitals and end punctuation); sentences make up paragraphs (which are spaced and indented); paragraphs make up sections, chapters, or complete stories; and chapters or stories in a book make up the whole book. Note chapter titles and page numbers. Practice finding "Chapter 2" or "page 20."

Optional: Show how the model of the day is drawn from a book. On what page is it found? How long is the model? How many paragraphs? What is the title? Can you identify the sentences in the model? How can you tell? How many sentences are there?

Three Ways to Tell a Sentence.

1. It has a capital letter to begin and end punctuation (period, question mark, or exclamation point) to end.
2. It expresses a complete thought; it does not "leave you hanging."
3. It has both a subject and a predicate or verb; it answers the questions: who or what did something (the subject), and what did they do (the verb or predicate)?

Look at some sentences in your model to see that they fulfill all three criteria.

To show how a sentence might not be a complete thought or might “leave you hanging,” try the following (an adverbial dependent clause): “Because it was raining...” or “After Mary gets home...” These incomplete sentences leave us hanging because we don’t know who is actually doing what. There is no main subject and no main predicate. We feel a need to complete them. So:

Because it was raining, we stayed home from the park.

Here the main subject is we. We did something. What is the predicate or verb -- what did we do? We stayed home from the park.

After Mary gets home, we will eat dinner.

Again, the main subject is we. We will do something. What is the predicate or verb -- what will we do? We will eat dinner.

Four Functional Types of Sentences.

Teach students the difference between declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory sentences. The difference is based on when and how we use these sentences, that is, on what their function is in our speech.

Declarative sentences are statements of fact. They declare that something is the case, or was the case, or will be the case.

You are learning grammar.

Interrogative sentences ask questions. They interrogate.

Will you learn how to write?

Imperative sentences give commands. An imperious person has a commanding personality. An imperator, in Latin, is a military general or commander.

Listen carefully. Work hard.

Finally, exclamatory sentences exclaim.

How much fun we shall have!

Declarative sentences (statements of fact) require a period at the end, interrogative sentences (questions) require a question mark, imperative sentences (commands) require a period or an exclamation point, depending on how emphatic the command is, and exclamatory statements require an exclamation point.

Beginning Capital & End Punctuation.

Teach students, when writing, *always* to start their sentences with a capital letter and end their sentences with a period, a question mark, or an exclamation point. Which end mark they use will be determined by which kind of sentence it is.

Daily Routine for Day 3 – Skill Level 1

Working on Sentences

- Sentence Identification
- Sentence Classification

Sentence Identification

Have students practice identifying sentences in the model. Find the beginnings (capital letter) and the ends (end punctuation). Mark them.

Sentence Classification

Classify the sentences in the model of the week as declarative (statements of fact), interrogative (questions), imperative (commands), or exclamatory (exclamations). Note the appropriate end punctuation.

As oral exercises or board work, try changing from one type of sentence to another. Can you turn declarative sentences in the model into questions, commands, or exclamations?

It rained today.
Did it rain today?
Pray for rain.
Quick! Close the windows! It's raining!

Skill Level 2 – Capital Letters & Simple Punctuation

When students are very comfortable with sentences and their classification, begin to work on capitalization and simple punctuation.

Suggested Lessons

Capitalization.

Capitalize the first word of every sentence. Students should also learn to capitalize all names of people and places (proper nouns).

Other things to be capitalized are titles (*The Little House in the Big Woods*), the word "I," and the word "O" as in "O Lord." (Note that "O" is different from the interjection "oh". Both are often used at the beginning of sentences and so are capitalized there anyway.)

To teach, work through your model of the day and explain all capitalization. If you run across any that you cannot explain by the five rules taught so far (first word of the sentence, names, titles, I, and O), make a note to yourself to look them up later and explain to students the next day. This is a good example to set for your students. Teachers do not have to know everything, but they do have to set a good example of how to go find out what is needed.

How to Write Dates.

Teach the proper capitalization and punctuation for dates. Students may practice by writing today's date in their copybook and on all their papers and compositions from now on, if they are not already doing so.

Teach the complete, proper form first, watching for the capitalization of the month and the comma after the number of the day. You may also want to supply students with a list of the months to learn for spelling.

September 17, 2002

Later, you may teach abbreviations for months, and the short form using all numbers:

Sept. 17, 2002

9/17/02

As an extension, teach students the days of the week, and write the day with the standard long form. Note the comma between the day of the week and the date in this form. Post a list of the days of the week for spelling.

Tuesday, September 17, 2002

Simple Punctuation.

You can also begin to teach other simple punctuation by working with models. Include, for example, apostrophes for contractions and possessives, and simple commas – for example, for words in a series, for obvious introductory elements, or for parenthetical elements providing extra information. A good approach to commas at this stage is to note their use in sentences where we need to pause or take a breath.

Teaching here is discretionary and based on what you find in your models. Do not try to give an exhaustive course in punctuation at the beginner level. Focus on end punctuation.

Daily Routine for Day 3 – Skill Level 2 Working on Capitals & Simple Punctuation
◆ Sentence Identification & Classification ◆ Capitals & Punctuation

Capitals & Punctuation

Use one sentence at a time from the model, and work up to a paragraph or the whole model. Locate all capitals and punctuation. Students should be able to explain most capitalization and all end punctuation. If they are able, ask them to explain any other punctuation which has been previously taught.

Skill Level 3 – Simple Quotes

Begin work on simple quotes when you need it for Writing Projects using dialogue.

Suggested Lessons

Simple Direct Quotes.

Students must learn to distinguish the actual words a character says in a story, from words attributed to him or words used by a narrator to lead into the direct quote. Compare:

“I’ll huff, and I’ll puff, and I’ll blow your house down!”

The wolf himself says this. You can tell especially because the wolf says “I.” This is called a direct quotation. It is what the character himself directly says. It requires special marks called quotation marks to show what he directly says. Can you find the marks?

Now look at this:

The big, bad wolf said *that* he would huff and puff and blow down the little pig’s house.

Here, someone else – the narrator or storyteller – is telling what the wolf says, but the wolf himself is not actually speaking. You can tell by the “that” and by the use of the pronoun “he”. There is no direct quote of a character in the story. This is called an indirect quote. No special marks are needed for indirect quotes.

What about this case:

The big, bad wolf said, “I’ll huff, and I’ll puff, and I’ll blow your house down!”

Here, there are two people talking, first the storyteller or narrator, who tells what is going to happen (that the wolf is going to speak), and then the wolf himself. In this case, part of the sentence is placed inside the quotation marks, the part that is the direct quote, or what the wolf himself directly says. The rest of the sentence is not placed inside quotation marks because this is what the narrator says.

How to Capitalize and Punctuate Direct Quotes.

Indirect quotes do not need any special marks. Direct quotes without any lead-in from the storyteller require quotation marks only around what is directly said:

“Hello!”

The trickiest quotes to capitalize and punctuate are direct quotes with a lead-in from the storyteller telling who is speaking. Teach how to use simple direct quotes using the chant: comma, space, quote, cap. This works for quotes of the following form:

He said, “Hello!”

Explain how end punctuation goes inside the closing quotation mark.

Two Other Formats for Simple Direct Quotes.

As an extension, for advancing students, teach the two other formats for simple direct quotations:

"Hello," he said.

"When I arrive," he said, "you will greet me."

Daily Routine for Day 3 – Skill Level 3
Working on Simple Quotes ◆ Sentence Identification & Classification ◆ Locate all Capitals & Punctuation ◆ Work with Quotes

Work with Quotes

Identify any direct quotations in the model. Carefully analyze their capitalization and punctuation.

Working orally at the board, make up a simple quote or two for characters in the model. What might they say? Write down the quote using proper punctuation and capitalization. Try rearranging the order in different ways, as with the "hello" example below.

Skill Level 4 – Introduction to Grammar

Before teaching this skill level, the teaching parent will need to know the basic parts of speech and be able to pick out obvious examples from a model.

Suggested Lessons

Eight Parts of Speech.

Very early on, students should begin memorizing the eight parts of speech. They should learn to list all eight, and to give a definition and examples for each one.

See the chart below.

Teach the list of eight first and continue to practice memorizing it. Add in definitions and examples one by one.

The Eight Parts of Speech	
<i>Definitions</i>	<i>Examples</i>
Noun (N) - a name for a person, place, thing or idea.	John Smith, Pocahontas, dog, England, home, child, coin, history, hope
Pronoun (PN) - a word that stands in for a noun.	I, you, he, she, us, him, them, ours, who, anyone, myself, herself
Verb (V) - a word that shows action, being, or state.	send, walk, see, care, be
Adjective (ADJ) - a word that describes (or "modifies" or "qualifies") a noun or pronoun.	hungry, young, old, solid, desperate, neat
Adverb (ADV) - a word that describes a verb, adjective, or another adverb.	often, quietly, cheerfully, wonderfully
Preposition (P) - a word that relates a noun or pronoun to another word in the sentence.	into, from, to, with, above, at, behind, by, during
Conjunction (CONJ) - a word that connects or joins words, phrases, or clauses.	and, but, or, after, until, therefore, however
Interjection (INJ) - a word that expresses surprise or emotion.	Oh, Ah, Wow, Hey

Nouns.

A noun is the name of a person, place, thing, or idea.

To teach nouns, pick out all the obvious nouns from a model paragraph. Put four columns on the board – one each for person, place, thing, and idea. List each noun from the model in the appropriate column. If you have an empty column, make up some words to use.

Notice which nouns are capitalized. These are called proper nouns. They name not just a bunch of things of the same kind, but are names of particular, individual people and places – one of a kind people and places. (This is the difference between proper nouns and common nouns.)

Pronouns.

A pronoun is a word that stands in for a noun.

To teach pronouns, again, use the model. Pick out all the pronouns and list them on the board. For convenience, use personal pronouns only: I, you, he, she, it, we, they, and related objective and possessive forms such as me, my, mine, him, his.

Verbs.

A verb is a word that shows action, being, or state.

Use the model to teach. Pick out all obvious verbs. Make three columns and list the verbs under their types: "Action", "Being", and "State". Actions verbs are easy to identify because they show action, usually a movement of some type. Verbs showing being are forms of the verb "to be": is, was, will be. (Do watch out for helping verbs – "to be" verbs used with an action or state verb, such as "is walking." Keep the main verb and its helpers together, and classify it according to the main verb.) If you don't have any verbs for state, make some up: seems, appears, sleeps, feels.

Adjectives.

An adjective is a word that describes or modifies a noun or pronoun.

The model is once again used to teach. Pick out all obvious descriptive adjectives. (Don't worry about articles or demonstratives for now.) Make a list.

Which nouns do the adjectives describe or modify?

Adverbs.

An adverb is a word that describes or modifies a verb – or sometimes an adjective or another adverb.

Pick out adverbs from the model. Look for words ending in "ly." Hint: Adverbs answer questions like when, where, and how? Make a list. If you don't find many single word adverbs, make some up by thinking of "ly" words to go with three or four verbs from the model.

Which verbs do the adverbs modify?

Adverbs also sometimes modify adjectives or other adverbs.

Prepositions.

A preposition is a word – often a little word – that relates a noun or a pronoun to another word in the sentence.

Use the model, and use the parts of speech chart, for examples of prepositions. Prepositions are often little words that tell where: in, on, over, under, above, below, behind, at. Other very common prepositions are: of, to, for.

Note: Some words frequently used as prepositions can also be used as other parts of speech. Be sure the words you pull out from the model are used in complete prepositional phrases which have the form: preposition, optional articles (a, an, the) and adjective(s), noun or pronoun. The final noun or pronoun in a prepositional phrase is called the “object” of the preposition. It is this “object” that the preposition is relating to another word in the sentence.

Conjunctions.

A conjunction is a word that connects or joins two or more words, phrases, or clauses together.

The most common conjunction is “and.” Look for “and” in the model. What does it connect together? Other examples of conjunctions are given in the chart. Can you find any of them?

Note: Words commonly used as subordinate conjunctions (e.g. after, before) are often used as prepositions, too.

Interjections.

An interjection is a word that expresses surprise or emotion.

Examples are Hey! Wow! Oh! Are there any interjections in the model? Can you make up some other interjections? They are very often written with exclamation points after them. Write some on the board.

Daily Routine for Day 3 – Skill Level 4
Working on Introduction to Grammar
• Sentence Identification & Classification • Locate all Capitals & Punctuation, including Quotes • Memory Work with Parts of Speech • Find all the ____’s • What part of speech is this?

Locate all Capitals & Punctuation, including Quotes

Continue as in skill levels 2 and 3. Making up direct quotes is not necessary all the time. Just be sure students understand the use of all capitals and much of the punctuation used in the model, according to the rules they have learned so far.

Memory Work with the Parts of Speech

List the eight parts of speech from memory. When asked about a part, the child should give the definition and an example or two.

Find all the Nouns, Pronouns, Verbs, Adjectives, etc.

Practice finding “all” nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, and interjections in the model.

Students at this age will not be able to identify every word in a model as a particular part of speech. Hence, they may not be able to find ALL pronouns, adjectives, adverbs, and conjunctions especially. But if you ask them to find all the nouns, they should be able to find most of them – at least the obvious ones. The same goes for most verbs (or verb forms, verbals), prepositions, and interjections. General familiarity here is all that is called for.

What part of speech is this?

Mark off 10-12 words or so in the model and ask students which parts of speech they are. Use obvious examples.

Day 4 – Copywork & Dictation

On Day 4, do copywork or easy dictation. There are not any precise Skill Levels here so much as there are various ways to continuously improve your child’s skill by gradually increasing the challenge. Work from copywork to dictation, from less to more, from studied to unstudied, from hints to no hints, and from easy material to more difficult material.

Daily Routine for Day 4 Copywork & Dictation	
• Copywork	
or	
• Dictation	

From Copywork to Dictation

Technically, copywork begins when students trace letters. From there, students may gradually move to copying from a card or paper set directly in front of them. It helps if there is only one line on the card, or if the child's paper can be positioned to move down line by line. This reduces the distance the child's eyes have to travel between model and copy. Eventually you can move to copying from the board, or from a book. For convenience, buy a little wire stand from an office supply store to hold books up and open.

When the student is comfortable with simple copy work, begin some easy dictation. For any given model, you can do a bit of both. For example, start with the dictation of a single sentence, then allow the child to copy the rest. Gradually increase the proportion being dictated. You can also adjust the challenge of dictation by increasing your speed and decreasing the number of repetitions you give.

From Less to More

The youngest child will start out by copying letters and single words. Work from there into copying single sentences, multiple sentences, and then whole models of several sentences to several paragraphs. When you shift to dictation, start with just a few words or a single sentence and increase the amount of material gradually.

From Studied to Unstudied

Studying a model before copying or dictation – especially before dictation – can also help a child to reproduce it more efficiently. Point out, and if necessary mark with a red pen, all punctuation, capitalization, and potential spelling problems. For copying, you can also mark off sentences or phrases or clauses to encourage the child to work several words at a time. For dictation, note the larger patterns of phrases, clauses, and sentences. When you dictate, always read the entire sentence first and encourage the child to just sit and listen and not begin to write. After reading the entire sentence so that the student is able to absorb the complete thought, then dictate whole phrases or clauses.

From your example, the child can learn to study the model first on his own before you dictate. Eventually, eliminate the need to study the model first. Your ultimate goal is for the child to take dictation from an unstudied model.

From Hints Given to No Hints Given

For dictation, you can also give hints as you go. The most help will be to proactively point out capitalization, punctuation, and spelling as you dictate. Tell the child exactly what he needs to know as he gets there. Write all words difficult to spell on the board. This is a perfectly acceptable way to begin dictation. From there, gradually decrease the number of proactive helps given, but respond to all requests. Ultimately, your goal is for children to take dictation without any help or hints.

From Easier to Harder Material

Last, increase the challenge by offering harder material. More difficult words and more complex sentences will require children to think very carefully as they write. Do not hesitate to return to copywork with difficult material before you try dictation on it.

Copywork and dictation are skills that are built up over many years. It will probably not be until grade 4 or 5 that students will be very comfortable with dictation on any but the simplest material. Whenever frustration sets in, return to copying for a while.

Tip – If they can read well, let students dictate to each other. Let the younger or less able student dictate first. This will give him extra practice with the model before he is required to write it. As he reads it aloud slowly several times, he will begin to identify phrases and clauses.

Chapter Four

Writing Projects

Just as you set aside 30 minutes four days a week for Analysis & Imitation, set aside a similar period, later in the day perhaps, to work on written compositions. These are the Writing Projects. For the beginner, Writing Projects are entirely imitative. In successive *progymnasmata* the Writing Projects will be more practice-oriented, along the order of 'theme writing'. Work from the same weekly model that you use for Analysis & Imitation.

The three major Writing Projects for beginning students of *Classical Writing* are:

- Rewriting a Short Narrative
- Rewriting a Short Narrative, with Simple Dialogue
- Rewriting a Short Narrative, with Descriptive Details

These three projects increase in complexity and in their demands on the student. The student should be very familiar with the simpler projects before moving on to the more difficult ones. He need not have mastered them completely, however. At this stage in writing, it is very common to see recurrent errors in capitalization, spelling and punctuation. Similarly, at this stage, children often write run-on and fragmented sentences. The best way for children to get over this hurdle is to practice writing daily, and for you to be a patient and encouraging, and persistent teacher.

As you plan your school year using *Classical Writing*, we recommend dedicating at least 24 weeks to this type of writing, eight weeks to each of the three projects, thereby adding writing skills sequentially as your child gains confidence. But the number of weeks you spend – writing roughly one project per week – can easily vary. This curriculum could take one year or two years, depending on your child's needs. Interspersed with these writing projects, study poetry and apply the principles of writing taught here in the child's other studies, too.

The recommended short narratives for this stage come from Aesop, but these Writing Projects also work well with shorter folk tales, fairy tales, tall tales, Bible narratives and historical legends. Or, take short selections from longer narratives, traditional tales, or the Bible. Again, use whatever model you are using for Analysis & Imitation.

After the complete description of the steps in each writing project we have inserted a table as a reference guide for you when you get ready to teach.

I. Rewriting a Short Narrative

Rewriting a short narrative is one of the most basic forms of imitative writing. It is a simple exercise to teach. The student reads a short account and retells it, first orally and then in writing. In this exercise the goal is to get the student to recount the content and the sequence correctly, all the while writing in complete sentences. Other goals for mastery in this exercise are improvement in basic writing mechanics, such as spelling, punctuation, capitalization and, potentially, the acquisition of an 'ear' for well-formed sentences. The narrative must be short enough that the beginning student understands it readily and is

able to retell it after hearing it once or twice. Do not hesitate to begin with very short two to three sentence models as you first introduce your students to *Classical Writing*.

Required concurrent Analysis & Imitation skills for rewriting the short narrative:

- Basic punctuation and capitalization [introduced]
- Complete coherent sentence writing [in progress]

Teacher Preparation:

- Choose a fable or a paragraph selection from a longer narrative.
- Familiarize yourself with the teaching procedure in this section.

A step by step teaching procedure is included below. Note that steps are not the same as days; different students will take longer with different steps, so schedule accordingly -- projects can be completed more quickly or overflow into the next week if necessary. For young children, writing one or two paragraph stories, one project per week is about the right time frame. But do note that, as with any project, flexibility is important. Take more or less time – whatever you and your child need.

Step 1 – Read & Discuss; Oral Retelling

This first step partially takes place in your Analysis & Imitation Day 1 introduction of the model. In addition discuss the story with your child with an aim to retell it orally.

1) Have your child read the model aloud to you.

2) Discuss the story.

- Who are the main characters?
- What are they like?
- What is the problem/crisis, or what does the main character want?
- What is hindering the main character from getting what he wants/needs?
- What do the characters say/think to themselves? To each other?
- How do they solve their problem?
- What is the moral/point of the story?

Step 2 – The First Draft

For the child who has never written a composition before, prepare him for the inevitable editing which will follow his first draft. First, make it clear to him that all writers write several drafts. Also, tell him that everyone benefits from having other people read and correct their work – including you. Honest critique helps us improve in our writing skills. Tell him that any time he writes anything, there will be at least two drafts written before a writing project is completed. Second, be sure to praise his efforts.

For rewriting a short narrative, we present three options.

Option 1 – Narration to Mom with Copywork.

The child dictates the story from memory, and mom writes it down or types it for him. During the next session, the child copies down his narration in his own handwriting.

Option 2 – Develop an Outline First.

For the child who has trouble sequencing events or remembering details, help him create an outline first.

Option 3 – The Child Writes.

Have the child write the story down from memory on his own.

The first option is the easiest and the place to start with a beginning writer. But whether you choose option 2 or 3 depends on your goals for your child as well as your child's abilities. Option 3, retelling a story from memory, is a very useful skill to train. On the other hand it is also important to teach your children to make careful, thoughtful narrations from the very beginning. A good memory can take a child a long way, but the ability to outline prepares him to dig more deeply into the story, to really "possess" it as his own. Developing an outline serves this purpose. Once that "habit of mind" is trained through the outline, it may be easier to accomplish excellence in writing when employing option 3.

Developing an Outline

- Read the entire narrative with the child and discuss it as above. Count the number of sentences in the narrative, n. On a blank lined piece of paper, label the lines from 1 to n.
- Read one sentence of the short narrative at a time and discuss the meaning of the sentence with your child.
- For each sentence, help your child choose three or four words to write on the outline. Help him think carefully about which words to choose from each sentence. The words should help him to remember what happened in that sentence. On the first line of your piece of paper, have the child write the chosen words.
- Go on to the next sentence, and proceed until all the sentences in the story are covered in the outline.
- When all the sentences in the short narrative are outlined, continue with either Option 1 or Option 3 above.

Step 3 – Correct the First Draft

Go over the first draft together. Depending on the independence and confidence of your child, use one of two options for corrections:

Option 1 – Do the corrections together.

You have two main aims:

1) *To identify mechanical errors:* spelling, capitalization and punctuation, and incomplete sentences. Go sentence by sentence. Do not point out to your child what kind of mistake you have just spotted. Show him the sentence in question, and let him find his own mistakes. For a less confident child you may have to clarify that you noticed a spelling error or a capitalization error, but for a more advanced child let him wrestle a bit with his text, trying to identify the problem before you step in to give it away. Corrections should be marked in bright colors so that they easily stand out from the penciled first draft. If possible let him do his own mark-up during the editing process. Be sensitive to the child's ownership of the work. Tell him that these notes are notes to himself and that first drafts are not for anyone's benefit but his own.

2) *To identify errors of language use.* Language usage errors typically fall in three main categories:

- Errors of Comprehension.

These are the errors where the child's writing reflects a misunderstanding of the original narrative. Begin by having your child read aloud his writing to you. Frequently he will note his own mistakes as he reads it out loud. If not, ask questions about the story line. If necessary re-read the model to set the story straight in your child's mind. If errors of comprehension are detected, the next days' work will require a major revamping of the original manuscript. Errors of comprehension can also occur if your child's outline did not sufficiently help him sequence and recall the story line. First look over his outline to see if this is the case. If so, go over his outline and the story step by step together, evaluating each word chosen. Replace vague words to optimize the outline. Subsequently have him rewrite the story on a blank piece of paper.

- Grammatical Errors.

Little children, knowing full well what to say in their own minds, but struggling when it comes time to put it down on paper, typically write sentences full of ambiguities. This could be of the pronoun/antecedent type, "Bob told Larry that he will not be able to play soccer", which begs the question of which boy will not be able to play. Ask your child, which boy will not be able to play. Show him the ambiguity and help him rework the sentence completely for greater clarity. Likewise look for consistency in keeping the same verb tense throughout the narrative. Look for subject verb agreement in number and look for the proper use of helping verbs.

- Errors of Sentence Structure.

"There is a piano for sale by a lady with mahogany legs." Here, the "mahogany legs" are better placed elsewhere in the sentence. Help your child enjoy the funny aspects of his own writing and help him move those "mahogany legs" where they modify the appropriate noun.

Option 2 – For the more independent child.

For the more independent child, staple a checklist to the front of the composition listing the four areas to check:

- spelling
- complete sentences
- capitalization
- punctuation

Let your child read his composition out loud to himself one sentence at a time in search of errors in those four areas before handing the marked up edited draft to you. Then proceed as above, and together, check for errors in language usage.

Step 4 – The Final Draft

In the fourth and last step the child completes his final draft with all mechanical and logical corrections incorporated. When this is done, the composition for a beginning writer is completed. The final copy has a coherent sequential story line, with proper use of capitalization, punctuation and spelling. All sentences are written correctly. The key to mastering this type of exercise is repetition.

Writing Project 1 Rewriting a Short Narrative	
Step 1	Read & Discuss; Oral Retelling
Step 2	The First Draft Option 1 - Child dictates; mom writes Option 2 - Child writes from outline Option 3 - Child writes from memory
Step 3	Correct the First Draft Child corrects with you or alone first. 1) Mechanical errors • Spelling • Capitalization • Punctuation • Incomplete sentences 2) Errors of language use • Errors of comprehension • Errors of grammatical construction • Errors of sentence structure
Step 4	The Final Draft

II. Rewriting a Short Narrative, with Dialogue

Once the child is confident in retelling the story line of short narratives, move on to writing simple dialogue with its associated capitalization and punctuation rules. Your child will probably still be making spelling errors, writing run-on sentences or forgetting capitalization from time to time. This is quite normal. With time and lots of practice he will improve.

Aesop's fables are again our first choice of narrative for this type of exercise, preferably the stories which contain dialogue as a major part of the story line. Also, a short dialogue selection taken from a longer narrative, such as from one of Andersen's fairy tales, would serve as a good choice for writing dialogue. Little children need a lot of practice learning to identify a direct quote in a story and distinguishing it from indirect quotes or the voice of the storyteller or narrator. Spend lots of time in your Analysis & Imitation sessions and in your read aloud sessions identifying direct speech in quotes before starting this type of exercise.

Required concurrent Analysis & Imitation skills:

- Basic punctuation and capitalization [in progress]
- Writing in complete sentences [in progress]
- Dialogue punctuation skills [beginning]

Teacher preparation:

- Choose a narrative passage.
- Familiarize yourself with the teaching procedure in this section.

Step 1 – Read & Discuss; Oral Retelling

This first step partially takes place in your Analysis & Imitation Day 1 introduction of the model. In addition discuss the story with your child with an aim to retell it orally.

1) Have your child read the model aloud to you.

2) Discuss the story.

- Who are the main characters?
- What are they like?
- What is the problem/crisis, or what does the main character want?
- What is hindering the main character from getting what he wants/needs?
- What do the characters say/think to themselves? To each other?
- How do they solve their problem?
- What is the moral/point of the story?

Step 2 – The First Draft

The child will now write the story from memory. If your child has trouble sequencing and remembering details, create a sentence by sentence outline as described above. The aim in this step is to complete a narrative first draft just like in the first Writing Project.

Step 3 – Correct the First Draft

After the child has written down the narrative in his own words, go over it in detail as described in the first Writing Project. For this first draft you will correct for spelling and other errors not related to quotation. In the second draft you will hone in more specifically on quotations.

The child rewrites the fable with all mechanical and language usage corrections.

Step 4 – Amplify the Narrative by Adding Dialogue

Now we are ready to work on a little bit of style. Some dialogue use is spontaneous by children. If that is the case, simply amplify *existing* dialogue in your child's story by extending it and using better verbs of utterance.

Other children tend to tell the story without dialogue, especially if the model story itself contains no dialogue. In that case, help your student locate a few places in his draft where dialogue could be inserted. Remind the child that the aim is to create "live" dialogue, that is to write the narrative with the characters actually exchanging words, not passive accounts of what someone said. What you want to avoid in your child's writing are the passive accounts like:

Then he told the crow that he thought the bird's voice was magnificent.

Rather you want to encourage your child to write direct quotations:

"Oh, beautiful fowl," exclaimed the fox, "I have heard wondrous tales about your magnificent voice."

To encourage your child to use dialogue, identify the characters in the story. Read through the draft and note instances where direct speech could be used. Revise as necessary by substituting or adding direct quotations.

Next, show your child the verbs from the "Utterances Chart" (below), and help him to choose verbs of utterance which are more interesting than the constant repetition of "he said", "he said", "he said". Substitute.

Finally, have your child underline each direct quotation in his draft. With your child, explore the feelings and thoughts and actions of each character. For example, in the fable "The Fox and the Crow", there are two characters. Consider the fox:

- Who is speaking? [Fox]
- How did the fox feel when he saw that piece of cheese? [Hungry, greedy]
- What would you say if you were the fox and wanted that piece of cheese? [the quote]
- With what kind of feeling might you have said it? [Nicely, rudely, sneakily, sleepily, carelessly]
- What would your tone of voice be? [Look for adverbs such as - Oily, sweet, cunning, demanding, admiring]

- How would your face look? [Pleasant, angry, sad]
- How would you be standing? [Upright and attentive, sitting relaxed, expectant]
- What would you do with your hands? [Hands clasped together, wringing hands, hands waving wildly, hands relaxed at side]
- What other body movements might you be doing?

The amplification of dialogue using questions like these serves two purposes. It analyzes the characters of a narrative, their voices, their motions, their postures; it helps a student to see tone of voice and body language as vital parts of communication. Also it enhances the student's writing. Not every idea needs to be incorporated with every instance of dialogue. Discuss all the points. Pick a few which seem appropriate. Ask your child which ones he wants to include. He will likely need your suggestions in phrasing the dialogue amplification, but as you train him in this important skill, he will start to make his own suggestions for what sounds right.

Ask as many or as few of these questions as your child can handle and have him add selected answers as stylistic revisions to his draft.

Utterance Chart				
<i>Loud or Quiet</i>	<i>Emotional</i>	<i>Neutral</i>		<i>Funny Noise</i>
burst out	cry	remark	declare	snort
shout	sob	notice	answer	hiss
bawl	cheer	echo	speak	crow
howl	smile	utter	reply	croak
yell	whine	exclaim	query	yip
bellow	retort	question	end	snap
whisper	interrupt	ask	note	bark
shush	stutter	comment	interject	howl
breathe	hesitate	point out	insert	hoot

As you revise the draft, pay attention to the new punctuation skills. Check for quotation marks around direct quotes; check for capitalization rules associated with quotations; and check for commas before and after quotes. If your child has difficulty dealing with both the comma and the quotation mark rules at the same time, teach the quotation marks in the first couple of exercises of this sort, and just show him how to insert commas and capitalization. When he is more confident with the quotation marks, add the rules for commas and capitalization.

Step 5 – The Final Draft

Write the final draft with dialogue revisions.

Writing Project 2 Rewriting a Short Narrative, with Dialogue	
Step 1	Read & Discuss; Oral Retelling (as in Project 1)
Step 2	The First Draft (as in Project 1)
Step 3	Correct the First Draft (as in Project 1)
Step 4	Amplify the Narrative by Adding Dialogue 1) Revise to include direct quotations; dialogue. 2) Use interesting verbs of utterance; see the chart. 3) Amplify the dialogue using questions: • Who is speaking? • How did he feel when ... ? • What would you say if you ... ? [the quote] • With what kind of feeling might you have said it? • What would your tone of voice be? • How would your face look? • How would you be standing? • What would you do with your hands? • What other body movements might you be doing? 4) Then: • Check for quotation marks around direct quotes. • Check for capitalization rules associated with quotations. • Check for commas before and after quotations.
Step 5	The Final Draft

III. Rewriting a Short Narrative, with Descriptive Detail

In the third Writing Project, the child will add descriptive details to his writing. A precursory, or at least concurrent, study of the basic parts of speech, such as nouns, verbs, and modifiers (adjectives and adverbs), is recommended before starting this type of project. Aesop's fables again are ideal for this exercise because they are short and concise. We also recommend trying a short selection from a longer narrative, especially one where there is a descriptive scene. The goal here is to amplify the details of the child's narrative by application of basic grammar skills, that is, identification of nouns and verbs in the student's narrative first draft, followed by amplification through the use of synonym substitutions or adding modifiers.

Descriptive writing is a matter of:

- 1) the "instinct" for recognizing proper sentence structure, which will emerge over years of reading quality literature and years of imitating it;
- 2) expanding the child's vocabulary to include many possibilities for expressing the same thing in different ways. (Classical rhetoricians call this "copia".) This goal is achieved through lots of reading, analysis, and writing imitation of good literature.
- 3) a thorough knowledge of grammar and syntax and its application in writing.

In this section we have outlined several procedures for adding descriptive details to narratives. The following descriptive techniques are presented for the beginner:

- noun synonyms
- modifiers for nouns
- verb synonyms
- modifiers for verbs

These basic techniques may be gradually introduced over several writing projects. They are not meant to be introduced all at once. Our suggestion is that you incorporate one of these techniques per week. If your child is struggling with a new skill, go even slower. The point is not to cover as many possibilities of descriptive writing as you can, but to have the child gain style and confidence in his writing. As the child grows in confidence with one technique, add another technique while continuing work on the previous skills.

Required concurrent analysis and imitation skills:

- Basic punctuation and capitalization [in progress]
- Complete sentences [in progress]
- Dialogue punctuation skills [not strictly necessary, but helpful]
- Identification of nouns, verbs and modifiers [beginning]

Preparation:

- Choose a narrative
- Familiarize yourself with the teaching procedure in this section.

Step 1 – Read & Discuss; Oral Retelling

Have your child read the model aloud.

Discuss the story as described in the previous sections.

Step 2 – The First Draft

The child will write a first draft as described in the previous sections.

Step 3 – Correct the First Draft

After the child has written the narrative, go over it in detail as above.

The child writes the second draft.

Step 4 – Amplify the Narrative by Adding Dialogue

If the story lends itself to amplification with dialogue, do that first. See Writing Project 2 above.

Step 5 – Amplify the Narrative by Adding Descriptive Detail

Next, work with nouns and verbs to identify synonyms and modifiers.

Working with Nouns – Synonyms

Begin by helping your child identify and underline the nouns in his second draft, one sentence at a time.

Identify which nouns could use more "life", or which nouns are over-used. For example, if the child is rewriting "The Fox and the Crow" from Aesop's fables, and uses the word "crow" or the word "fox" six times in one paragraph, explore alternative options:

- 1) Replace the noun with an occasional pronoun, where the context is clear.
- 2) Replace it with a more interesting noun, a noun synonym.
- 3) Keep the original noun and add descriptive modifiers, adjectives.
- 4) Use both a noun synonym and adjectives.

Replacing the noun with an occasional pronoun is an excellent choice when the context is clear. Instead of "fox", say "he". Watch the context carefully to make sure the pronoun is used clearly! For example, if there are two male characters, be sure that the context makes it clear who "he" is. [If necessary, consult an English handbook to be sure you understand the rules for pronoun referents since this is one of the most common errors in English usage.]

The second alternative is to replace the noun with a synonym. A synonym is a word with a similar meaning to the original word. For example, synonyms of the word "dog" could be: canine, mutt, puppy, poodle, and Dalmatian.

In the case of synonyms, you are not limited to synonyms depicting the species of the character in question. There are not, after all, too many ways in which can you say "crow", and using a word like "avian" is rather contrived for an elementary school essay. In fables, it is far more effective, once the characters have been properly introduced, to describe them by their moral character. We can refer to the fox being a "trickster", for example, or the bird being a "flighty fool". Using these kinds of synonyms for moral character adds humor and force to the narrative.

In other words, to teach synonym nouns effectively, divide your brainstorming into two parts. First, look at the species:

- What kind of animal was it? [bird, fish, mammal, etc]
- What are the different ways we can say that? [crow, avian, raven]

Next, look at moral traits:

- What was the character like on the inside, in his heart? [brave/cowardly, honest/deceitful, diligent/lazy, cheery/gloomy, self-controlled/ill tempered]

Find "names" for that moral trait. For example, a brave person can be described as a gallant knight; a self-controlled person can be described as steady as a rock; a lazy person is described as a bum; etc.

Working with Nouns – Adjective Modifiers

Beyond replacing an over-used or dull noun with either a pronoun or noun synonym, consider adding a noun modifier, an adjective, to the noun. You can do this with or without replacing the original noun.

The key to discovering good adjectives is to work to describe characters (or places or things) from the story on both the inside and the outside.

Ask the child what size, shape, color, or texture the character is.

- Is he old/new, shaggy/clean?

Next, ask about his mood.

- Is he happy, sad, puzzled, angry, smug, nervous, content?

Consider his moral character.

- Is he selfish, deceitful, diligent, persistent, gloomy, stupid, smart?

When you have discovered a few choice descriptions, add one or two before the noun. Modifiers should be used sparingly, or the narrative looks contrived; however, a few modifiers add spice to the writing.

Working with Verbs – Synonyms

Next, move on to work with verbs. To add descriptive power to verbs we have the same basic options as with nouns, excepting, of course, the use of pronouns.

- 1) Replace the verb with a more interesting one [a verb synonym]
- 2) Keep the verb and add descriptive modifiers [adverbs]
- 3) Replace the verb with a synonym verb and add descriptive modifiers to the new verb synonym.

Have the child underline the verbs in his draft one sentence at a time.

Assess which verbs are over-used. Most commonly, children tend to over-use forms of the verb "to be" [am, is, are, was, were, been] in their writing. For movement they tend to exclusively use forms of the verb, "to go". Other over-used verbs include versions of "to say" and "to like" and "to have". Explore ways to avoid these vague verbs. Instead of "said", use the utterances chart. Instead of "go", think up different ways of moving: fly, run, dash, trot, dive, stroll, hobble, stumble, slide, etc. Substitute these stronger verbs for the vague ones. Instead of "like", ask the child to think of other ways to express this: to drool over, to crave, to enjoy, to wish, to love, to delight in, to relish, to appreciate. Substitute.

Proceed in a similar fashion with any verb which is either uninteresting or over-used.

Working with Verbs – Adverbial Modifiers

Verbs can also be modified. Again, proceed sentence by sentence. Identify the active verb in each sentence.

If a particular sentence needs a little more detail to make it more interesting, ask the "adverb questions" about the verb, especially:

- Where?
- When?
- How?

If the child wrote, for example, "The fox picked the cheese off the ground and ate it," you would have two verbs in the sentence: picked and ate. Ask questions. How did he pick it up? [greedily, quickly, tauntingly] When did he eat it? [immediately, right away, soon]

As with nouns, verb modifiers should be used sparingly.

Step 5 – The Final Draft

Rewrite the final draft with the added description. Correct for any errors with the child as described above. The essay is complete when all errors are corrected.

Writing Project 3 Retelling a Short Narrative, with Descriptive Details	
Step 1	Read & Discuss; Oral Retelling (as in Project 1)
Step 2	The First Draft (as in Project 1)
Step 3	Correct the First Draft (as in Project 1)
Step 4 [if wanted]	Amplify by Adding Dialogue (as in Project 2)
Step 5	Amplify the Narrative by Adding Descriptive Detail <i>Work with Nouns</i> • Replace the noun with an occasional pronoun where the context is clear. • Replace it with a more interesting noun, a noun synonym. • Based on species • Based on moral character • Keep the original noun and add descriptive modifiers, adjectives. • Use both a noun synonym and adjectives. <i>Work with Verbs</i> • Replace the verb with a more interesting one. • Keep the verb and add descriptive modifiers, adverbs. • Replace the verb with a synonym and add adverbs.
Step 6	The Final Draft

Chapter Five

Planning

The *Classical Writing* program is flexible. Depending on your preferences you can plan your whole school year in one session, or you can plan a month ahead. If you prefer to gauge your planning based on how your child does from week to week, you can make your decisions on a weekly basis.

Planning for this program is easy. All you need to do on a weekly basis is choose your daily routines and lessons from the Analysis & Imitation section, choose your weekly Writing Project, and select a model.

Your planning should be based on your child's needs. Make sure to expect your long term planning to be a rough estimate of what Analysis & Imitation materials you would like to cover for the year. Do not lock yourself into too many details. It is nice to have a list of the models you would like to use and a rough plan for how long to take with each of the Writing Projects, but your specific plans should depend strongly on the immediate needs of your child and should be chosen on a weekly, or at most, a monthly basis. Detailed plans for Analysis & Imitation lessons should be made daily or weekly. Your pace and your choices depend entirely on your child's progress.

Daily Planning

We suggest that you spend one 30 minute session each day with your child working on Analysis & Imitation skills. For example, your Analysis & Imitation session might be scheduled in the morning. In addition we suggest you spend another session later in the day working on the Writing Projects. Build these routines into your days by scheduling two sessions every day, four days per week for beginners. No program, however perfect, will work unless it becomes your high priority and is worked into your daily routine.

Weekly Planning

To plan for each week you need your daily Analysis & Imitation routines, a Writing Project, and a model.

The weekly planning sheet (found in appendix E) has daily slots in which you can jot down your plans and their corresponding page references from this book.

Remember, simply choose:

- the Analysis & Imitation skills for Days 1-4,
- your Writing Project for the week,
- and your model.

Planning Analysis & Imitation

Determine which skills your child needs to work on for Analysis & Imitation this week.

Choosing

Day 1 is always an introduction to the model. Follow the same teaching routine every week. For Days 2, 3 and 4, if you are brand new to this book, start at the beginning of the Analysis & Imitation section and pick the beginning skills corresponding to Day 2, Day 3, and Day 4. For Day 2, choose the beginning word Skill Level (reading and phonics analysis); for Day 3, choose the beginning sentence Skill Level (identifying sentences); and for Day 4, decide how you will do copywork or dictation (for example, begin with simple copywork on one sentence). From these beginning levels plan to move ahead at a pace at which your child thrives. This is preferable to having a rigid agenda to finish a certain Skill Level or a certain number of pages in a given amount of time. It is wise to set general long-range goals, and then use them to set intermediary goals. Be flexible to adjust the long-range goals if it becomes clear that intermediary goals are taking longer to achieve.

Scheduling

For each of the Days 1-4, jot down the Analysis & Imitation skills you will be working on this week, and note the page numbers for each day, so you can quickly look up the teaching materials as you need them.

Teacher Preparation

If you will be teaching material that is unfamiliar or uncomfortable for you to teach, jot down your plans in the teacher preparation section. Note how and when you plan to look over the material, or how and when you plan to study that material in other reference works prior to teaching.

Day 1 – You will want to familiarize yourself with the model and any background information on the author.

Day 2 – If you are unfamiliar with the *Writing Road to Reading* (WRTR) method of analyzing and marking words, you need to learn it. (If you are not using WRTR, determine how your current approach to spelling can be applied to words drawn from models.) Beginning with spelling skills, you may want to pre-select the words to use as spelling words that week.

Day 3 – If your model is longer than a couple of paragraphs, select one or two paragraphs to work with. You will probably want to review the grammar concepts yourself before you teach. In addition, we recommend you begin your own intensive study of grammar now in preparation for the next level of *Classical Writing*.

Day 4 – Select from the whole model the sentences or paragraph(s) you will use for copywork or dictation.

Planning the Writing Project

Decide which Writing Project to do for the week.

Choosing

The Writing Projects increase in complexity and in demands on the student, so you will want to go through them sequentially. Start with the first project, and take a week to work with your child on his first composition. When finished, assess his work. Repeat that type of Writing Project anywhere from three to six times with different models. Then move on to the next type of Writing Project. As you progress, remember that during beginning amplification you need not complete every step in the Writing Project while working on the first composition of that type. Add a few new concepts with each new composition and the exercises will be less overwhelming for your child.

Scheduling

Note page references where the step-by-step instructions for your chosen Writing Project can be found. Plan to do one or more steps each day. Schedule according to how much time it takes your child to work through the various steps of the project. Some students are relatively quick at drafting; others take longer.

Generally, we suggest that the student complete one composition per week. A weekly schedule for the completion of one composition might look like this:

Day 1 - Do step 1 and begin step 2. Discuss, do an oral retelling, and prepare an outline. If you will not use an outline, begin drafting today.

Day 2 - Do step 2, drafting. If at all possible, finish the first draft today.

Day 3 - Do step 3, corrections. Begin amplification with dialogue and/or description if there is time.

Day 4 - Finish amplification, do final corrections, and finish the final draft.

This schedule is not to be followed slavishly. Writing cannot be squeezed into four 30-minute sessions and be expected to magically produce the perfect essay. Be flexible. Some writing assignments are easier than others. Sometimes the child is inspired; sometimes, not. Be flexible and aim for one composition per week, but realize that the writing process and the learning it produces are more important than the end product. Some weeks will be slow, and some projects will spill over into the following week. Watch for incremental improvements. Don't discourage the child with too much criticism all at once. This is a long-range plan for mastering writing.

Preparation

Make a note in the teacher's preparation boxes about things with which you need to familiarize yourself in order to teach this Writing Project. For Projects 2 and 3, read the sections on amplification and decide which aspects of amplification to present to your child this week.

Depending on which options you elect for your child's drafting and corrections, you will

need to actively help him through all steps. Over time, the child should become more independent. You will always need to explain new aspects of the Writing Project and help with corrections. Help the child to edit. Try to lead him to discover his own errors.

Planning the Model

Choose your model for the week.

Models for the week may be chosen from *Classical Writing* resources, from Internet sources, or from your own books.

Choosing

Your weekly model selection should be made based on which Writing Project you choose to do. Look over the list of models and choose the ones you think will tie in best with this week's Writing Project, and, if possible, the ones that will fit best with your child's other school work. A significant number of the models for the beginning Writing Projects are best practiced using Aesop's fables. However, you may also choose different short narratives, or pick a one- or two-paragraph selection from a longer narrative to use as a model. Choose models you think would appeal most to your child. We recommend focusing on a certain author for a given number of weeks. It helps your child develop a feel for the literature. Perhaps you will do five weeks of Aesop's fables as a group, then seven weeks of legends, followed by four weeks of tall tales, and so forth.

Scheduling

Note the name of the model you choose, and where it can be found (book, page number). Make sure your model is suitable for the Writing Project you have chosen.

Preparation

Preparation of the model for Analysis & Imitation is described above.

See the appendices for planning forms and examples.

Assessment

The assessment slot in the weekly schedule is for you make a note of the things that worked and the things that did not. When you plan in detail for the following week, this helps you to remember to review material with which your child struggled or to bypass any additional work on skills he has mastered.

Also, reviewing these notes later will help you assess progress every few months. Assessments should be made at two levels – daily as you go, to determine how fast to introduce new material, and every few months, to see how the skills are sinking in and what you may need to review.

Yearly Planning

If you choose to develop a long-range plan, the twelve-week planning sheet in Appendix E is meant to give balance to the materials you wish to cover over a quarter or a semester. You will need three copies of this sheet for 3×12 weeks = 36 weeks of yearly planning.

While this beginning writing curriculum can easily stretch over two school years, our general recommendation is that you expose your children to all the concepts in the Analysis & Imitation section during the first school year and then cycle through the skills again if your child needs additional practice with the concepts. The aim here is to build daily and weekly routines. These routines center around analyzing literature and using the skills learned from literature analysis in writing. Our aim is not to continuously expose the child to a lot of new information.

Choosing

Decide how much time you want to spend on *Classical Writing - Aesop* this school year.

Next, decide which models and Writing Projects you want to work on and how much time to spend on each project.

Finally, choose roughly which Analysis & Imitation skills you aim to work on during each part of the school year.

For example, a 36-week, full school year schedule might look like this :

- 6 weeks - Aesop – introduction to rewriting short narratives
- 6 weeks - fairy tales - rewriting short narratives with dialogue
- 6 weeks - Aesop – rewriting short narratives with description
- 6 weeks - Bible stories - rewriting short narratives with dialogue
- 6 weeks - tall tales and folk tales- rewriting short narratives with description
- 6 weeks - legends - full narrative scheme with dialogue and description

Scheduling

Jot down models and page references on the planning sheet. Write down chosen Analysis & Imitation skills as well as their corresponding page references. Note your chosen Writing Projects and their page references. (Make sure models and Writing Projects match in type.)

Appendix D contains three sample 12 week schedules for a first year student.

Appendix A

The Fourteen Progymnasmata

[pro-gym-nas'-ma-ta]

The ancient Greeks prepared their grammar school students for rhetoric study by having them work on a series of writing exercises called the *progymnasmata*. These preliminary exercises increased in length and complexity as the student advanced through the list.

The sequence of these exercises varies slightly among rhetoricians. For example, there is some debate as to where the exercise of description fits into the sequence. Below is an outline of the exercises compiled in the 4th Century AD by Aphthonius:

1. **Fable** [*mythos*]: Retelling of a fable, usually Aesop's.
2. **Narrative** [*diegema*]: Summarizing a short narrative, usually a couple of paragraphs.
3. **Anecdote** [*chreia*]: Amplification of a wise saying or an action, usually with a moral point.
4. **Proverb** [*gnome*]: Similar to the anecdote, amplification of a proverb.
5. **Refutation** [*anaskeue*]: Arguing against an issue in question.
6. **Confirmation** [*kataskeue*]: The reverse of refutation.
7. **Commonplace** [*koinos topos*]: Elaborate upon generalizations.
8. **Encomium** [*enkomion*]: Praise of a given subject, usually a person.
9. **Invective** [*psogos*]: The opposite of encomium.
10. **Comparison** [*synkrisis*]: Compare a given subject with another subject.
11. **Characterization** [*ethopoeia /prosopopoeia*]: Invention of dialogue which a given person might have said on a specified occasion.
12. **Description** [*ekphrasis*]: Vivid description of an event or place.
13. **Thesis** [*thesis*]: Reasoned inquiry into a debatable question, which argues a general point.
14. **Proposal of law** [*nomou eisphora*]: Arguing for or against a legislative proposal in general terms.

On-line Sources

Aphthonius' *progymnasmata*:

<http://www.leeds.ac.uk/classics/resources/rhetoric/prog-aph.htm>

Libanius' *progymnasmata*:

<http://www.leeds.ac.uk/classics/resources/rhetoric/prog-lib.htm>

Silva Rhetoricae, Brigham Young University's rhetoric site:

<http://humanities.byu.edu/rhetoric/silva.htm>

Appendix B

Six Fables from Aesop

- ***The Hare and the Tortoise***
- ***Androcles***
- ***The Crow and the Pitcher***
- ***The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse***
- ***The Fox and the Crow***
- ***The Lion and the Mouse***

The Hare and the Tortoise

Aesop

The Hare was once boasting of his speed before the other animals. "I have never yet been beaten," said he, "when I put forth my full speed. I challenge any one here to race with me."

The Tortoise said quietly, "I accept your challenge."

"That is a good joke," said the Hare; "I could dance round you all the way."

"Keep your boasting till you've beaten," answered the Tortoise. "Shall we race?"

So a course was fixed and a start was made. The Hare darted almost out of sight at once, but soon stopped and, to show his contempt for the Tortoise, lay down to have a nap. The Tortoise plodded on and plodded on, and when the Hare awoke from his nap, he saw the Tortoise just near the winning post and could not run up in time to save the race. Then said the Tortoise:

"Plodding wins the race."

Androcles

Aesop

A slave named Androcles once escaped from his master and fled to the forest. As he was wandering about there he came upon a Lion lying down moaning and groaning. At first he turned to flee, but finding that the Lion did not pursue him, he turned back and went up to him. As he came near, the Lion put out his paw, which was all swollen and bleeding, and Androcles found that a huge thorn had got into it, and was causing all the pain. He pulled out the thorn and bound up the paw of the Lion, who was soon able to rise and lick the hand of Androcles like a dog. Then the Lion took Androcles to his cave, and every day used to bring him meat from which to live. But shortly afterwards both Androcles and the Lion were captured, and the slave was sentenced to be thrown to the Lion, after the latter had been kept without food for several days. The Emperor and all his Court came to see the spectacle, and Androcles was led out into the middle of the arena. Soon the Lion was let loose from his den and rushed bounding and roaring towards his victim. But as soon as he came near to Androcles he recognized his friend, and fawned upon him, and licked his hands like a friendly dog. The Emperor, surprised at this, summoned Androcles to him, who told him the whole story. Whereupon the slave was pardoned and freed, and the Lion let loose to his native forest.

Gratitude is the sign of noble souls.

The Crow and the Pitcher

Aesop

A Crow, half-dead with thirst, came upon a Pitcher which had once been full of water; but when the Crow put its beak into the mouth of the Pitcher he found that only very little water was left in it, and that he could not reach far enough down to get at it. He tried, and he tried, but at last had to give up in despair. Then a thought came to him, and he took a pebble and dropped it into the Pitcher. Then he took another pebble and dropped it into the Pitcher. Then he took another pebble and dropped that into the Pitcher. Then he took another pebble and dropped that into the Pitcher. Then he took another pebble and dropped that into the Pitcher. At last, at last, he saw the water mount up near him, and after casting in a few more pebbles he was able to quench his thirst and save his life.

Little by little does the trick.

The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse

Aesop

Now you must know that a Town Mouse once upon a time went on a visit to his cousin in the country. He was rough and ready, this cousin, but he loved his town friend and made him heartily welcome. Beans and bacon, cheese and bread, were all he had to offer, but he offered them freely. The Town Mouse rather turned up his long nose at this country fare, and said: "I cannot understand, Cousin, how you can put up with such poor food as this, but of course you cannot expect anything better in the country; come you with me and I will show you how to live. When you have been in town a week you will wonder how you could ever have stood a country life." No sooner said than done: the two mice set off for the town and arrived at the Town Mouse's residence late at night. "You will want some refreshment after our long journey," said the polite Town Mouse, and took his friend into the grand dining-room. There they found the remains of a fine feast, and soon the two mice were eating up jellies and cakes and all that was nice. Suddenly they heard growling and barking. "What is that?" Said the Country Mouse: "It is only the dogs of the house," answered the other. "Only!" said the Country Mouse. "I do not like that music at my dinner." Just at that moment the door flew open, in came two huge mastiffs, and the two mice had to scamper down and run off. "Good-bye, Cousin," said the Country Mouse, "What! Going so soon?" said the other. "Yes," he replied;

"Better beans and bacon in peace than cakes and ale in fear."

The Fox and the Crow

Aesop

A Fox once saw a Crow fly off with a piece of cheese in its beak and settle on a branch of a tree. "That's for me, as I am a Fox," said Master Reynard, and he walked up to the foot of the tree. "Good-day, Mistress Crow," he cried. "How well you are looking today: how glossy your feathers; how bright your eye. I feel sure your voice must surpass that of other birds, just as your figure does; let me hear but one song from you that I may greet you as the Queen of Birds." The Crow lifted up her head and began to caw her best, but the moment she opened her mouth the piece of cheese fell to the ground, only to be snapped up by Master Fox. "That will do," said he. "That was all I wanted. In exchange for your cheese I will give you a piece of advice for the future."

"Do not trust flatterers."

The Lion and the Mouse

Aesop

Once when a Lion was asleep a little Mouse began running up and down upon him; this soon wakened the Lion, who placed his huge paw upon him, and opened his big jaws to swallow him. "Pardon, O King," cried the little Mouse: "forgive me this time, I shall never forget it: who knows but what I may be able to do you a turn some of these days?" The Lion was so tickled at the idea of the Mouse being able to help him that he lifted up his paw and let him go. Some time after the Lion was caught in a trap, and the hunters who desired to carry him alive to the King, tied him to a tree while they went in search of a wagon to carry him on. Just then the little Mouse happened to pass by, and seeing the sad plight, in which the Lion was, went up to him and soon gnawed away the ropes that bound the King of the Beasts. "Was I not right?" said the little Mouse.

Little friends may prove great friends.

Appendix C

Teaching Examples

This appendix features examples of how the program was run in our two households. We chose to show you how we worked with our children during three different weeks on three different models with four children ages 6, 7, and just 9.

- ◆ ***Week One: The Hare and the Tortoise***
- ◆ ***Week Two: The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse***
- ◆ ***Week Three: King Canute on the Seashore***

Week One: The Hare and the Tortoise

MODEL

The Hare and the Tortoise

The Hare was once boasting of his speed before the other animals. "I have never yet been beaten," said he, "when I put forth my full speed. I challenge any one here to race with me."

The Tortoise said quietly, "I accept your challenge."

"That is a good joke," said the Hare; "I could dance round you all the way."

"Keep your boasting till you've beaten," answered the Tortoise. "Shall we race?"

So a course was fixed and a start was made. The Hare darted almost out of sight at once, but soon stopped and, to show his contempt for the Tortoise, lay down to have a nap. The Tortoise plodded on and plodded on, and when the Hare awoke from his nap, he saw the Tortoise just near the winning post and could not run up in time to save the race. Then said the Tortoise:

"Slow and steady wins the race."

In the Gustilo Household ~

The Children

Kate is 6 and Eli is just 9. Both are good readers and have done a little writing before, but not too much. Their spelling is coming along gradually, but still needs much work. Eli is especially challenged to stay on task and to write neatly by hand.

The Plan for the Week

For Analysis & Imitation, we used the following schedule:

Day 1 - introduce the model

Day 2 - spelling words (Skill Level 2)

Day 3 - review sentence definitions and functional types (Skill Level 1)

Day 4 - copywork of 2-3 sentences

For our Writing Project, both children used Project 1, a simple retelling of the fable.

Marking Up the Model

The model above shows how we marked it up in our household. Basically, we just chose a variety of words for spelling analysis (underlined). For sentences, our task was to identify them all and determine what kind they were (declarative, interrogative, imperative, exclamatory), so we did not focus on any one or two sentences in particular. I made extra

copies of the model for each of the children to work with. They underlined spelling words and drew slash marks between each sentence on their own copies.

Analysis & Imitation

Day 1 - We read and discussed. Kate took a very moralistic little tone when she read. (cute) Eli was harder to motivate in the read-aloud. He gets embarrassed. He also tends to slur through his reading, so we focused on correct enunciation. We did have fun discussing especially the "what a joke" -- the hare says to the tortoise, and in the end the joke's on him. For unknown vocabulary, we talked about "contempt."

Day 2 - The children do not spell very well yet. We took a little over 10 words from the model to analyze using WRTR techniques, including many quite basic words. We analyzed them and copied them down. I explained the difference between accept and except. The kids still had some difficulty with the words when they used them later in their own compositions, so they are both solidly at the spelling Skill Level 2. (Neither had any problem reading, especially since I read it aloud first, so the phonics Skill Level 1 was too easy.) Eli may be able to do some beginning dictionary skills soon, but his spelling is still pretty bad, so we'll stay at Skill Level 2 for both of them for a while.

Day 3 - We reviewed the three definitions of sentences, identified sentences in the model -- which was a little tricky in one or two places where there were direct quotes -- and then reviewed the four types of sentences. We classified each sentence in the model. Eli and Kate had done this before and remembered for the most part. They only got confused with a couple of the long names: interrogative and imperative. Then we did some board work, taking one of the sentences ("I challenge anyone here to race with me") and turning it back and forth into each other type: Please race with me. Will you race with me? Race me! Next week we'll review simple capitalization and punctuation and teach quotation marks.

Day 4 - Sister-in-law with cousins came to visit, so we had a short day. I had the children pick 2-3 sentences to copy.

The Writing Project

For the writing project, both Eli and Kate retold from memory. They did not make outlines. They insisted on writing on the computer. We started on day 1 after we did a quick review of our earlier discussion and an oral retelling. Eli said he couldn't retell the fable orally; he had to retell it as he wrote it out. He did fine that way. They finished their draft on Day 2, then we corrected on Day 3. I reminded them to check all their beginning caps and end punctuation. Then we fixed spelling and a couple wording problems in Eli's draft (he tends to forget where he is and doubles things up, or starts to say one thing then changes his mind). Kate had one unclear pronoun. Both of their versions were very short. I tried to let them find their own mistakes - they would ask me about spelling they knew was wrong, and I pointed out spelling mistakes they missed. I kept totally clear of content and made no suggestions except to remind them both to add the moral, which they both forgot! How could they!? I don't know where Eli got all the super-short sentences. He doesn't usually write that way. I think he was in a hurry to be done.

The Race of the Tortoise and the Hare

by Kate Gustilo (age 6)

One day the Hare challenged a Tortoise to a race. The tortoise accepted. The hare darted off but he stopped to rest. The tortoise walked on. When the hare woke he saw the tortoise at the winning post. Slow and steady wins the race.

The end

The Tortoise and the Hare

Eli Gustilo (age 9)

The Hare was busy boasting to the other animals of his speed. Then he challenged anyone to a race. The Tortoise accepted. The Hare laughed. Then a date was decided and the Hare raced ahead. The Tortoise walked on and on. The Hare meanwhile took a nap. The Tortoise passed. When the Hare awoke he found the Tortoise past the finish line.

Slow and steady wins the race.

In the Jaqua Household ~

The Children

Alex is 7 1/2 and Kirsten also just turned 9. Both are good spellers and readers and have done quite a bit of writing before. Alex has an easy time academically speaking, but he would rather play than write and tends to rush to get his work done. Kirsten writes little stories on her own in her free time. She wants to be a writer when she grows up.

The Plan

For Analysis & Imitation, we used the following schedule:

Day 1 - introduce the model

Day 2 - dictionary skills (Skill Level 3)

Day 3 - review sentence definitions and functional types (Skill Level 1)

Day 4 - Dictation and diagramming

For our Writing Project, both children used Project 2, a retelling of the fable with dialogue.

The Model

I had two different versions of the story. One was my Mio Winter's Aesop story book which we did not mark in, and the other was the version above. The children did not write from the same version which was interesting to me, because their compositions are so similar.

Analysis & Imitation:

Day 1 was especially great, each child read aloud his or her version of the model WITH EXPRESSION. They really got into the characters. We discussed characters, conflict, climax and resolution. We talked about boosters and arrogance and being too sure of one self. The children pondered a great deal about how the tortoise could be so SURE he would win. They went so far as to suggest that the turtle had dealt with the hare before and knew what he would be like in a race. We talked about not being boosters ourselves.

Day 2 I picked spelling words from the Mio Winter Aesop book: *amused, consented, distance, ridiculous, steadily, peacefully, swiftest* and *tortoise*. We did a little bit of syllabication, only **tortoise** gave serious spelling trouble. The rest of the time was spent working on dictionary skills, saying our alphabets forwards and backwards, mostly backwards. Alex knows how to look up words in a dictionary, but needs lots of practice. We alphabetized our 8 word list. Each child looked up and copied down the definition of 4 words.

For Day 3 - We worked on punctuation related to writing quotes. The quotes are going well, but the other punctuation associated with dialogue, the comma's and periods between the actual quote and the rest of the text needs more practice. I had them read through the model and find different types of sentences: declarative, interrogative, imperative and exclamatory.

Day 4 - We did a dictation from the model and they diagrammed it. I took model sentences but simplified them. They worked on subject-linking verb- predicate, subject-verb-direct object and also some sentences with object of the preposition and modifiers.

Writing Project:

Day 1 - This story was a familiar one. Both children begged me not to have to outline. Alex ended up outlining anyways because he could not keep the story straight in his head. They both typed their first draft on the computer, printed them, after which each child did his own independent editing. Basically I would say, "Check for capitals," and each child looked over his draft and marked the errors with a red pen, then "Check for punctuation," and then "Check for complete sentences." At that point I looked over each composition and added corrections.

Day 2 - Both children went back to the computers, re-edited what they had marked up on Day 1, after which they each printed their final draft. In both cases, I kept my "tentacles" out of the stories, the sentences and choices of words. However about half of the correct punctuation and paragraphing was prompted by me. They both capitalized correctly second time through when I told them to check just for that. The "tortoise" came out in some interesting spelling variety, not even consistent from line to line.

Day 3 and 4 - We wrapped up the Hare and the Tortoise writing projects on Day 2 this week because I had some science writing I wanted them to do.

The Hare and the Tortoise

by Alex K. Jaqua (age 7)

"You are so slow," said a hare to a tortoise one day. "Well, I pity anyone who has to crawl along as you do."

The tortoise said, "Do you really think so I think we shall have a race and I bet I will win."

"What a boaster you are. Besides, you know very well you cannot win. Where shall we race to?" asked the hare.

"To that tree over there."

"Agreed, but who will judge?"

"The fox will judge," said the tortoise.

So they called the fox, told him the start and the end, and on his word the race began. The tortoise started at once. The hare did the same. Seeing that he had left the tortoise out of sight, the hare took a little nap. By and by the hare woke up and when he reached the goal, the tortoise was already there.

"Slow and steady wins the race," said the fox.

THE END

The Tortoise and the Hare

Kirsten M. Jaqua (age 9)

"What a slow fellow you are," said the hare to the tortoise. "I feel sorry for anyone who has to creep about as you do."

"Oh really!" said the tortoise, "I declare a race and I assure you I will win!"

"Oh, how silly, but that is fine with me ,slow poke, let the fox judge the race," laughed the hare and the race began with the fox watching. The hare ran ahead to make the tortoise feel bad. Then the hare, thinking the tortoise would never catch up, lay down at the side of the road and took a nap. The tortoise however sneaked past the sleeping hare so as not to wake the hare up. When the hare awoke it ran all the way to the goal. But the tortoise was already there.

MORAL: SLOW AND STEADY WINS THE RACE

Week Two: The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse

MODEL

The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse

Now you must know that a Town Mouse once upon a time went on a visit to his cousin in the country. He was rough and ready, this cousin, but he loved his town friend and made him heartily welcome. Beans and bacon, cheese and bread, were all he had to offer, but he offered them freely. The Town Mouse rather turned up his long nose at this country fare, and said: "I cannot understand, Cousin, how you can put up with such poor food as this, but of course you cannot expect anything better in the country; come you with me and I will show you how to live. When you have been in town a week you will wonder how you could ever have stood a country life."

No sooner said than done: the two mice set off for the town and arrived at the Town Mouse's residence late at night. "You will want some refreshment after our long journey," said the polite Town Mouse, and took his friend into the grand dining-room. There they found the remains of a fine feast, and soon the two mice were eating up jellies and cakes and all that was nice.

Suddenly they heard growling and barking. "What is that?" said the Country Mouse. "It is only the dogs of the house," answered the other. "Only!" said the Country Mouse. "I do not like that music at my dinner." Just at that moment the door flew open, in came two huge mastiffs, and the two mice had to scamper down and run off. "Good-bye, Cousin," said the Country Mouse, "What! Going so soon?" said the other. "Yes," he replied;

Better beans and bacon in peace than cakes and ale in fear.

In the Gustilo Household ~

The Plan

Day 1 - introduce the model, discuss

Day 2 - spelling words (Skill Level 2)

Day 3 - review basic capitalization & punctuation (Skill Level 2); teach quotes (Skill Level 3)

Day 4 - copywork of 2-3 sentences

For our Writing Project, Kate did a simple retelling (Project 1). However, she heard her

brother doing dialogue and so wanted to do some of her own. Her story ended up being a hybrid of Projects 1 and 2. Eli did a very simple Project 2, retelling with a bit of dialogue. He and I worked on correct punctuation for the direct quotes and on using different words from "said".

Marking Up the Model

The model above shows how we marked it up. Spelling words are underlined. We focused on the direct quotes for sentences.

Four-Day A & I and Writing Project

Day 1 - The first day we read the story and discussed it. While reading out loud themselves, Eli and Kate both got into using different voices for the characters. Eli's impersonations were wonderful! He used a deep rough voice for the Country Mouse and a high-pitched, snobby voice for the Town Mouse. We talked about whether we liked simple food or fancy food (predictably, they both preferred the cake, but decided bread and cheese were probably healthier for every day). We discussed what the moral of the story meant. I explained what the "music" was (the dogs barking) and they asked about "mastiffs".

Later in the morning (our second session of the day, for the Writing Project), upon my asking them to retell the story, they had a more difficult time. I decided they needed to outline this story. I helped them work on their outlines for the first paragraph or so, then they wanted to finish on their own. Kate drastically compressed her outline in the second paragraph, but by that time she had the story line down from memory. When drafting, she used her outline mostly to help her with spelling. Eli ended up with quite a long outline, but later decided it was too much to write it all out for his own composition. He, too, retold from memory after the first couple sentences.

Day 2 - On Day 2, for model work we went through spelling words using WRTR analysis. We spent the rest of our first session working on independent word lists from their outside spelling program, doing WRTR analysis and dictation. During our second (Writing Project) session, the kids drafted their stories, using their outlines as described above. They used the computer as usual. Both of them completed very rough drafts.

Day 3 - For sentence Analysis & Imitation this week, we worked hard on a review of basic capitalization and punctuation, then did a lesson on quotation. We talked about indirect and direct quotes. The kids are still a little fuzzy on this, so it will take some continued work over several weeks. We also studied the placement of quotation marks, commas, and capital letters. They learned the chant: comma, space, quote, cap. We "tested" the quote rules on our model and found all the sentences with direct dialogue to conform to the rules.

For our writing session, the kids read through their drafts again, and I reminded them to check for beginning capitals and end punctuation. I asked them to look for any direct quotes (or add quotes) and try to punctuate them as best they could. Eli did a spelling check. While Kate was working on her own draft, I went through Eli's with him one sentence at a time. We fixed all the spelling, capitalization and punctuation mistakes. We spent time especially to get his direct quotes correct. Then I worked with Kate to correct her first paragraph.

Day 4 - Again this week, we did two to three sentences of copywork. Eli's handwriting was atrocious. I made him rewrite it again. For the Writing Project, I worked with Eli on his direct quotes to find better words than "said". This was a fun exercise. We looked at the utterance chart for examples, but didn't find what we needed for the first "said". This ended up staying as it was. We changed to "squeaked" for the Mouse yelling good-bye and "asked"

for his Town friend's query. Eli finished up quickly. I then worked with Kate to finish her draft. She was focused on her direct quotes, too, and spontaneously used "asked". The "I love you" affirmations at the bottom of their compositions, originally typed way down at the bottom of their page so they could scroll down and surprise me (Kate copied Eli), assured me they had fun with this story.

The Two Mice

by Kate Gustilo (age 6)

Once a upon a time a town mouse visited his cousin, but his cousin had only beans and bacon to serve him. The town mouse said to his cousin, "I don't know how you can put up with this food. Come with me, and we will have everything delicious."

"Surely you are hungry, cousin, from the journey," said the town mouse.

While they were eating cake, they heard barking. "What was that?" asked the town mouse's cousin.

"That was just the dogs of the house." In a flash the town mouse's cousin was out the door. Better beans and bacon in peace than cake and ale fear.

The end I Love you.

The Two Mice

by Eli Gustilo (age 9)

Once upon a time a town mouse went to visit a country friend. The country friend loved his town friend and made a feast of beans and bacon. The town mouse stuck up his long nose at the food. Town Mouse said, "Come with me, and I will show you how to live."

Town Mouse took Country Mouse to a feast in the city. Then they heard barking. Then two big mastiffs came in! The two mice ran to safety, and Country Mouse squeaked, "Bye!"

Town Mouse asked, "Why so soon?"

"Better beans and bacon in peace than cake in fear."

The End I love you Mom and Dad

In the Jaqua Household ~

Our week started off with a planned medical appointment out of town. Monday gone, and our normal school week being a four day week for language arts, I was trying to cram a normal *Classical Writing - Aesop* week into three days.

Alex, age 7, used the model shown above, and Kirsten age 9, used the Mio Winter version

of the story.

This week we used the following schedule

Day 2 - introduce the model, spelling words (Skill Level 2), sentence punctuation (Skill Level 3, quotes)

Day 3 - 8 parts of speech and diagramming (Skill Level 4)

Day 4 - Unrelated Special Science project. No Analysis & Imitation.

A&I WEEK

Day 2 - [in which we did the work of a normal Day 1 and Day 2 A&I schedule]

- *introduce the model*: Alex read aloud his version of the model and then Kirsten read hers. The discussion centered around the arrogance of the Town Mouse's attitude towards the Country Mouse and his surroundings. Alex did not quite understand the point of the story without some explanation.

- *word level skills*: The children seem to have consistent trouble spelling the plurals of words which end in "y", like baby, puppy and such. y -> ie for plural spelling, so I picked all the words from the model ending in y and plural in ies. There were more of those in Mio Winter's book, hence my choice of that story for spelling words. We studied the rule and did the spelling of the following words: singular and plural, jelly, dainty, luxury, poverty, security. We also spelled hedgerow, banquet, delicious [which they both got wrong] and stalks. They alphabetized the words and I helped.

Alex look up the words he could not define, Kirsten did her dictionary words on her own.

- *Sentence level* : [which we did on the same day as Day 1 stuff] I picked a paragraph at the end of Mio Winter's account where the Country Mouse and Town Mouse make their parting comments. After dictation the children had to insert correct punctuation and capitalization. The biggest problem was not putting in enough periods. Their punctuation reflected run-on sentences. There was a lot of battle fatigue at the end of this A&I session.

[I will not cram two days' work into one session again!]

Day 3 - First the children recited their memory work on the eight parts of speech and the subsequent definitions. Afterwards they each took their printed copy of the Model above and highlighted all the active verbs and subject nouns they could find. The trick was not to confuse a noun-derived word used as an adjective, such as "country" in "country mouse", with a noun properly used as a noun.

I dictated the beginning of the story. Each child copied the dictation in his own composition book. When we got ready to diagram, they took turns getting to diagram sentences on the board. We ran into one *verbal* which I had to look up in Mary Daly's *Whole Book of Diagrams*: "*She ate the simple food only to be polite*" The other sentences were slightly simplified from the model, always with the subject noun followed by the verb, then either a direct object, predicate adjective or a prepositional phrase. Kirsten understands it well, Alex is coming along.

WRITING PROJECT WEEK

Day 1 - No Day 1

Day 2 - Both children outlined this story. No, they did not want to, but Mom is mean. Alex used the version above, Kirsten preferred the Mio Winter version. Kirsten both outlined and wrote half of her first draft on that day. Alex was, to put the best possible spin on it, exhausted and stopped after the outline.

Day 3 - Alex wrote the first draft on his own on the computer. I sat down with him and he read it aloud to me. He caught over half of his mistakes on his own just reading it out loud. I would point to a sentence and ask "What's wrong there?" He would find his mistake and laugh, or I would give more hints. He had ambiguous use of the word, "it", which could have been either mouse.

Kirsten wrote the second half of her draft. I made her go over it again while at the computer [in a futile attempt to save on ink and paper]. Her check list for editing was:

- 1) Looking for caps,
- 2) Looking for missing punctuation in quotations.
- 3) Checking for run-on sentences.

Then I read the first draft aloud with her looking for run-on sentences. We read in whispers because she does not want her twelve year old brother to hear her mistakes. We took her run-on sentences piecemeal and asked "... is this a sentence on its own? If so, insert either comma in front or use a coordinating conjunction or separate them as independent sentences." At coordinating conjunctions, she lit up and mentioned the *FANBOYS*' list: **For, And, Nor, But, Or, Yet, So**. [Apparently, she was listening in on Nick's lesson from *Jensen's Punctuation* from the day before]. I also made her made to go over her draft to insert more interesting details.

Day 4 - As a group, we went over the *Utterance Chart* from the *Dialogue Project* and spent time talking about how to say "said" in a more interesting way. We also talked about how each mouse felt through the story. Then we discussed how we express such sentiments. Kirsten took the Utterance Chart [I forgot to have an extra copy printed out] and went to her computer for her final draft. Alex went to the other computer. The assignment for both was to change the words 'said, answer, ask', so that those verbs by themselves did not occur more than once in the story.

Alex did some on his own. Later he and I used our junior thesaurus to look up synonyms. I helped by suggesting a couple of verbs not in the thesaurus. He chose the ones he wanted. I suggested adding in motion, like "said the mouse as he shook his head" - type of addition to speech, but Alex refused to add it in. [smile] I told him, that it would be in next weeks lesson and at that point it will be required. Kirsten did all her work on her own. All I did was check the punctuation and correct a couple of typos, the content and presentation was hers.

The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse

by Alex Jaqua (age 7)

Once a town mouse went to visit his cousin in the country. When he came to the door his cousin the Country Mouse let his cousin in. On the table there were bacon, beans, cheese, and bread.

But the Town Mouse just turned his nose up and commented,

"You have very poor food. You should see the town. It is far better than this. I think you should come to the town for a week." A bit after they went to the town.

"You will want some refreshments after our long journey," remarked the Town Mouse. They went to the grand dinning room. There they found cakes, fruits and all that nice stuff. They heard some growling and barking.

The Country Mouse inquired, "What is that noise?"

The Town Mouse replied, "It's only the dogs."

"ONLY the dogs?" shouted the Country Mouse.

Then the door opened and two men came in to clean the table, and the mice ran into the Town Mouse's den.

The Country Mouse uttered, "Good-bye, Cousin."

"What! Are you leaving already?" asked the Town Mouse.

"Yes," retorted the Country Mouse, "Better to live simply with safety than to live elegantly with fear."

The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse

By Kirsten M. Jaqua (age 9)

Once upon a time there was a Town Mouse who visited a Country Mouse. The Country Mouse served wheat stalks, bread, and water as a meal. The Town Mouse ate sparingly, for she did not really like the food very much. Now the Town Mouse liked her own home much more than the country, and talked a lot about her home saying things like, "There are pastries, cheesecakes, cherries, wines. There are also cheeses, noodles, chicken, scones, bread, and bacon. Oh, there are all sorts of food. I even gathered scraps of cloth for a bed."

The Country Mouse would beg, "Tell me more, please."

That night the Country Mouse dreamed, she was a Town Mouse with all the wonderful things her friend had described. In the morning the Town Mouse inquired of the Country Mouse, "Would you like to come home with me to the town?"

"Oh yes, of course. Why, I have nothing else to do!" replied the Country Mouse. Together they went to town. When they arrived, the Town Mouse invited the Country Mouse to the remains of a feast. But just then the cat scratched on the door and meowed loudly.

"What was that?" asked the Country Mouse.

"Oh, that is only the cat," the Town Mouse smiled .

"Only the c- c- c cat? Cats eat mice!" stuttered the Country Mouse.

"Shtt!" whispered the Town Mouse, "The servants are coming. Hide!"

But the Country Mouse only picked up her bags and declared, "I'm leaving."

"So soon?" queried the Town Mouse.

"I would rather live with poor food and security than have nice food and no security," retorted the Country Mouse.

Week Three: King Canute on the Seashore

MODEL

King Canute on the Seashore

A hundred years or more after the time of Alfred the Great there was a king of England named Canute. King Canute was a Dane; but the Danes were not so fierce and cruel then as they had been when they were at war with King Alfred.

The great men and officers who were around King Canute were always praising him. "You are the greatest man that ever lived," one would say. Then another would say, "O king! there can never be another man so mighty as you." And another would say, "Great Canute, there is nothing in the world that dares to disobey you." The king was a man of sense, and he grew very tired of hearing such foolish speeches.

One day he was by the seashore, and his officers were with him. They were praising him, as they were in the habit of doing. He thought that now he would teach them a lesson, and so he bade them set his chair on the beach close by the edge of the water.

"Am I the greatest man in the world?" he asked.

"O king!" they cried, "there is no one so mighty as you."

"Do all things obey me?" he asked.

"There is nothing that dares to disobey you, O king!" they said. "The world bows before you, and gives you honor."

"Will the sea obey me?" he asked; and he looked down at the little waves which were lapping the sand at his feet.

The foolish officers were puzzled, but they did not dare to say "No." "Command it, O king! And it will obey," said one.

"Sea," cried Canute, "I command you to come no farther! Waves, stop your rolling, and do not dare to touch my feet!"

But the tide came in, just as it always did. The water rose higher and higher. It came up around the king's chair, and wet not only his feet, but also his robe. His officers stood about him, alarmed, and wondering whether he was not mad.

Then Canute took off his crown, and threw it down upon the sand. "I shall never wear it again," he said. "And do you, my men, learn a lesson from what you have seen. There is only one King who is all-powerful; and it is He who rules the sea, and holds the ocean in the hollow of His hand. It is He whom you ought to praise and serve above all others."

In the Gustilo Household ~

It was a hectic week, with visitors and unexpected interruptions on two days. We worked a little bit on our disrupted days and continued over into a fifth day this week to finish up.

The Plan

Day 1 - intro to the model; begin outlines for Project 2 with dialogue

Day 2 - spelling (Skill Level 2); finish outlines & begin drafting stories

Day 3 - review quotes & start a review of parts of speech (which the children have learned in brief before); finish drafting stories

(Note: It took us four days, with interruptions, to finish with the plan for Days 1-3.)

Day 5 - copywork; correct drafts & add attention to dialogue

Analysis & Imitation

Day 1 - This was a long model so it took quite a while to read it. I read it, Kate read it (which took a few minutes), then Eli read it. The model prompted lots of discussion, first of all historical. Who was King Alfred? The children knew him from a book we had read previously. When did he live? (A simple timeline went up on the board, showing dates for Charlemagne - 800, Alfred - 900's, Canute - 1000's.) Where did these kings live? (France, Britain) Out came the globe. Then we read a couple web pages (which I had printed off in advance) about King Canute. Then we discussed the story. We especially discussed when and why people might be praised and decided that they should be praised only when they were worthy of it, and that was only when they were good (not necessarily powerful). We thought it was OK to praise people, but never to praise them "above God", because God is always the source of good.

Day 2 - Spelling. The children did better this week with remembering their words for use in their own writing. I let Kate help choose which words we should work on.

Day 3 - Grammar. We reviewed quotation marks and how to punctuate direct quotes. Eli remembered! He also did much better using quotes in his writing for the week. (We only had a 10-15 minute class this day.) On Day 4, we listed out the eight parts of speech and discussed their definitions. I quizzed the kids to see if they remembered, and they only

missed three (conjunction, interjection, and preposition -- which are difficult words to remember).

Day 5 - Copywork, two sentences. We used the extra time to work on writing projects.

Writing Projects

Day 1 - no class.

Day 2 - The children worked on outlines. Eli did an excellent job as I helped him to stay on task by reading the next sentence for him. He outlined virtually the whole thing except for a couple of the repeated praises of the officers. Kate had a more difficult time outlining. The story was too long (mental note to use only Aesop's fables with her for a while), and she was having trouble deciding what to keep. I read the story aloud to her. She told it back to me (with a few prompts), and then we wrote up a short outline together, from which she wrote.

Day 3 - A short day. The children set up their files. (They prefer to write at the computer.) Each of them wrote only a sentence or two.

Day 4 - They finished drafts pretty much on their own, except Kate kept coming to ask me how to spell things. Eli did an especially good job with his quotation marks.

Day 5 - This was a long session, at least a half hour each (so an hour plus total). Eli had done a good job writing. He had only a few mistakes and recognized them almost as soon as I hinted at them. We worked with his dialogue. He had fun with "cheered" and "bellowed". I also tried to get him to add a couple descriptive words for King Canute. We ended up with "wise" (adjective) and "wildly" (adverb). Eli had a unique interpretation of the King's feigned (or real?) madness. Despite her retelling, outline, and work on the model for the better part of a week before she had to write it, Kate's retelling had a couple lapses in the story sequence and logic. (King Canute starts out at the seashore, for example. The officers also seem to see no problem with the King commanding the sea. Kate must have thought they were incredible fools, anyway, to be praising Canute above "all things" -- including God, so she didn't put such a gaff past them.) But she did very well with her sentences and quotations and seemed pleased with it, so after some basic corrections, given our time limitation, we decided to be done.

King Canute

by Kate Gustilo (age 6)

Once upon a time a King called Canute was at the seashore with his officers. His officers were praising him as they were used to doing. King Canute did not like them praising him above all things. The King thought he would teach them a lesson.

So he bade them put his chair on the beach. Then he asked them, "Does the sea obey me?"

"Of course," they said, "Command it to do something, and it will obey."

But of course the sea did not stop touching his feet. "Now you know there is only one King Almighty," said Canute.

King Canute on the Seashore

by Eli Gustilo (age 9)

King Canute ruled in England a hundred years after Alfred the Great. His officers were always praising him. They exclaimed, "Nothing in the world dares to disobey you!" Wise King Canute thought he would teach them a lesson. He went to the seashore and ordered them to place his chair on the beach.

Canute asked them, "Do all things obey me?"

His officers cheered, "Yes!"

"Sea!" Canute bellowed, "Come no farther!" But the tide came in and wet his feet and his royal robe. The men around him were shivering with fear. Was the king mad?

King Canute took off his crown, threw it onto the sand, and declared wildly, "I will never wear it again! And you, my men, know that there is only one King all-powerful."

In the Jaqua Household ~

Both children used the model of the story as shown above. This was a very normal week for us. No interruptions, nothing was out of the usual.

A&I WEEK

Day 1 - When we read aloud the model, Alex was King Alfred, Kirsten took the part of the foolish attendants and I was the narrator. We discussed how to know flattery from true praise. We also had a long talk about how people fear kings and others in power and will say all sorts of silly nonsense to please them. This led us to talk about how a virtuous person is not blinded by the prestige of people's power but looks at the character of a person.

Day 2 - Our spelling words were taken from most difficult words I could find in the model above. [I have made a mental note to find slightly harder models next time, especially for spelling for the nine year old]. Both kids alphabetized their spelling lists. We split the spelling list in half. Alex looked his half of the words up in the dictionary. It takes him a long time to find words in the dictionary, but I left him to "struggle" on his own. Kirsten wanted to look her half of the words up in Roget's Thesaurus, rather than in her normal Junior Thesaurus. She needed some help locating the entries because of the numbering system in Roget's. She also had trouble, with the word "powerless" and had to be reminded to cut off the suffix and just look up "power" first.

Day 3 - We did dictation from the model from the section where Canute is asking his officers if he is the greatest. The children had to discern where one sentence ended and where the next began and insert all punctuation. The commas in quotes are still "hit and miss". Also, they both suffer from a severe case of run-on sentences.

In addition we worked on memorizing the 8 parts of speech again. My twelve year old, who is not part of this study, but who constantly listens in, came up with a memory tool for the 8

parts of speech. Actually it is 9 parts of speech, because he includes *Participles*. He took the initial letter of each part of speech and came up with PIP VAN CAP. Kirsten and Alex took turns writing PIP VAN CAP vertically on the board, inserting the names of all 9 parts of speech next to their corresponding letters.

Day - 4 This time Kirsten and Alex begged to have dictations from their writing projects rather than from the model. We dictated six sentences, three from each of their writing projects. They took their sentences to the board and each diagrammed three sentences on the board. I left them alone for the first ten minutes to figure out how to start diagramming a sentence which begins with a prepositional phrase rather than with a subject noun. It proved very difficult. They do best with their diagramming, if either I write up the diagramming skeleton and just ask them to fill it in with the words from their sentence, or if I simplify model sentences for diagramming.

WRITING PROJECT WEEK

Day 1 - Alex completed a very detailed outline of the model and stopped at that. He reported, by his way of counting, over 30 sentences in the model, so we had a little talk about how to identify a sentence. Kirsten chose not to outline hers. She typed a little over half of the story from memory on day 1.

Day 2 - I helped Alex write his rewrite of King Canute. He was suffering from "don't know what to say". His composition came about as a result of my reporter's questions: "Who, what, when, where, how and why". He typed the first half, but tired of the length of it, so I typed the second half of his composition, while he dictated the words to me. - Kirsten finished her story and saved it. I had not time to look at hers because my twelve-year old was struggling through the rewrite of a difficult poem and needed my attention badly.

Day 3 - Alex was made to look through his composition to find capitalization errors and punctuation errors. I looked it over with him sentence for sentence and asked him for each error he had missed, to tell me what was wrong. Afterwards he was given the *Utterance Chart* to look for synonym verbs for "said", "answered" and "asked".

Kirsten had several run-on sentences from yesterday's draft which we shortened together.

Kirsten and Alex, then, had a session with me on descriptive writing. We located in both compositions too many instances of "king" and "officers", which we looked up in the Jr. Thesaurus and changed accordingly. Kirsten also tried her hand at modifying a few nouns in her essay with adjectives. She underlined all her nouns and decided which ones would sound better with a little description. Alex was too tired of the project to put much effort into that part. He chose to spend the rest of his time at the computer drawing pictures of the king and his officers and the seashore, which he pasted into the printed version of his composition.

Day 4 - We looked over the compositions, made a few corrections on punctuation and spacing of dialogue on the printed page and did a computer spell check. Both children have trouble remembering commas before or after direct address. We printed the compositions and put them aside. Because we had such a short writing day, I gave them a long handwriting assignment instead.

King Canute on the Seashore

By Alex Jaqua (age 7)

About a hundred years after King Alfred the Great there was a King of England called Canute. Canute was a Danish man. His father, the king of Denmark, gave him England to be king of. The Danes were not mean as they used to be.

Canute's officers often praised him.

One would say, "You are the greatest man on earth that ever lived."

Another would say, "There was never a better man than you. There is no one who dares disobey you."

The king was a man of sense and he started getting tired of these annoying speeches. One day he was at the beach with his men. They were praising him as usual. The king bade them set his chair at the edge of the water.

He inquired of them, "Am I the greatest man on earth?"

His officers answered, "Yes."

Then he asked, "Do all things obey me?"

The foolish men remarked, "Yes, the whole earth bows before you and gives you honor."

"Does the sea obey me?" Canute asked.

The officers were puzzled but they didn't dare say no. "Command it, O King, and it will obey you," said one.

The Dane expressed, "Sea, do not go any further. Waves stop your rolling!"

But the sea did not stop and the waves kept rolling. The ruler threw off his crown and remarked, "I will not wear my crown again. This should teach you a lesson, my officers. There is only one who can control the seas, God, the Father. You should praise Him, not me."

King Canute the Great

by Kirsten M. Jaqua (age 9)

There once was a wise Danish monarch named Canute whose officers always praised him as if he were a god, saying things like:

"Nothing dares disobey you, O mighty King!"

or

"The world bows before you!"

King Canute was a sensible ruler and got very tired of this as you will see. One day when he was at the beach with his servants, who were as usual praising him, he decided to teach them a lesson. First he made them move his chair near the waves

"Am I the greatest man on earth?" asked His Majesty.

"O King, there is no doubt about that!" exclaimed his senseless officers.

"Will the sea obey me?" inquired the sovereign.

"All things obey you! O Royal One," replied one of his men.

"Sea!" bellowed King Canute, "Do not dare to touch my feet!"

But the tide came as it always did and wet not only his feet but his robes too. The foolish officers stood around him wondering if he was mad. Canute the Great then threw his crown on the ground, "I shall never wear it again!" declared he. "And you, my men, let this be a lesson to you! From now on you will praise only the real ruler of our earth, the one and only God."

Appendix D

Sample 36 Week Plan

First Twelve Weeks' Sample Schedule

Week	Unit	Model	A&I Day 1	A&I Day 2	A&I Day 3	A&I Day 4	Writing Project	Notes
1	Aesop	The Hare and the Tortoise	Intro, discussion, vocabulary	Skill Level 1 or 2, spelling or phonics	Skill Level 1 Sentences	Beginning Copybook	Writing Project 1 simple narrative	
2	Aesop	Androcles						
3	Aesop	The Crow and the Pitcher						
4	Aesop	Town Mouse & Country Mouse	Work on pronunciation in reading		Skill Level 2 Capitalization & punctuation			
5	Aesop	The Fox and the Grapes						
6	Aesop	The Lion and the Mouse						
7	Andersen	The Princess and the Pea			Skill Level 3 Simple quotes		Writing Project 2 add simple dialogue	Day 3 continue with general punctuation
8	Andersen	The Top and the Ball						Select shorter passage for A&I
9	Fairy Tales	Goldie-Locks and the Three Bears						Select shorter passage for A&I
10	Fairy Tales	The Gingerbread Boy						Select shorter passage for A&I
11	Fairy Tales	The Three Little Pigs						Select shorter passage for A&I
12	Fairy Tales	The Three Billy Goats Gruff						Select shorter passage for A&I

Second Twelve Weeks' Sample Schedule

Week	Unit	Model	A&I Day 1	A&I Day 2	A&I Day 3	A&I Day 4	Writing Project	Notes
1	<i>Legends</i>	<i>A Laconic Answer</i>	<i>Continued discussion and vocabulary</i>	<i>Skill Level 2 Spelling</i>	<i>Skill Level 4 Grammar</i>	<i>Beginning Studied Dictation</i>		<i>In dictation remind of caps and punct.</i>
2	<i>Legends</i>	<i>Alexander and Bucephalus</i>			<i>Review Sentences, punctuation</i>			
3	<i>Legends</i>	<i>Diogenes</i>			<i>Begin 8 parts of speech memory</i>		<i>Writing Project 3 description noun modifiers</i>	
4	<i>Legends</i>	<i>Cincinnatus</i>			<i>Parts of speech - nouns</i>			
5	<i>Legends</i>	<i>Julius Caesar</i>						
6	<i>Legends</i>	<i>Cornelia's Jewels</i>			<i>Parts of speech- pronouns</i>			
7	<i>Aesop</i>	<i>The Fox and the Grapes</i>					<i>Writing Project 3 description verb modifiers</i>	
8	<i>Aesop</i>	<i>The Ant and the Grasshopper</i>			<i>Parts of speech - verbs</i>			
9	<i>Aesop</i>	<i>The Wolf in Sheep's Clothing</i>						
10	<i>Aesop</i>	<i>The Dog in the Manger</i>			<i>Parts of speech adjectives</i>			
11	<i>Aesop</i>	<i>The Ass in Lion's Skin</i>						
12	<i>Aesop</i>	<i>The Milk-maid & her Pail</i>			<i>Parts of speech - adverbs</i>			

Third Twelve Weeks' Sample Schedule

Week	Unit	Model	A&I Day 1	A&I Day 2	A&I Day 3	A&I Day 4	Writing Project	Notes
1	<i>Bible Stories</i>	<i>Moses on the Mountain</i>	<i>Continue discussion and vocabulary</i>	<i>Skill Level 3 dictionary skills</i>	<i>Skill Level 4 Grammar - Adverbs</i>	<i>Unstudied dictation</i>	<i>Writing Project 3, full amplification</i>	<i>Writing with dialogue & description</i>
2	<i>Bible Stories</i>	<i>David and Goliath</i>						<i>Pick shorter selection for A&I routine</i>
3	<i>Bible Stories</i>	<i>Daniel in the Lion's Den</i>			<i>prepositions</i>			<i>Pick shorter selection for A&I routine</i>
4	<i>Bible Stories</i>	<i>Jesus Raises Lazarus</i>						<i>Pick shorter selection for A&I routine</i>
5	<i>Bible Stories</i>	<i>Parable of the Sower</i>			<i>conjunctions</i>			<i>Pick shorter selection for A&I routine</i>
6	<i>Bible Stories</i>	<i>The Good Samaritan</i>						
7	<i>Legends</i>	<i>King Alfred and the Cakes</i>			<i>interjections</i>			
8	<i>Legends</i>	<i>King Canute and the Sea Shore</i>						
9	<i>Legends</i>	<i>Sons of William the Conqueror</i>						
10	<i>Legends</i>	<i>Bruce and the Spider</i>			<i>Continue to review grammar definitions</i>			
11	<i>Legends</i>	<i>The Story of Robin Hood</i>						
12	<i>Legends</i>	<i>The Story of William Tell</i>						

Appendix E
Planning Forms

Weekly Plan for: _____

	Preparation	Model	Analysis & Imitation	Writing Project
Day 1				
Day 2				
Day 3				
Day 4				
Assessment				

Twelve Week Plan for: _____

[illegible]

About the Authors

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